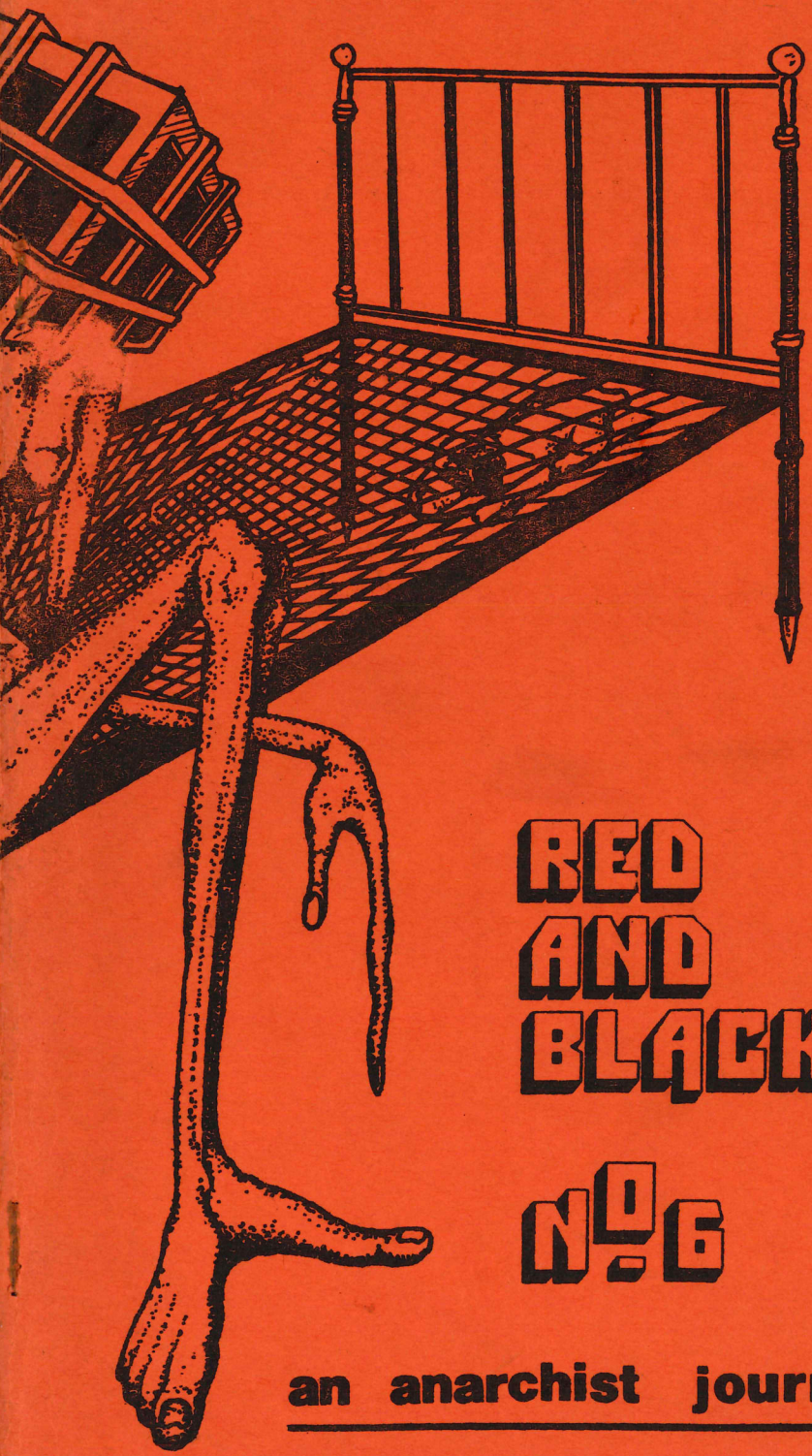


RED AND BLACK

No. 6

an anarchist journal

50¢

RED & BLACK

winter 1975

The next issue of "Red and Black" is going to appear before the end of this year. If there is sufficient interest and financial support it will appear as a quarterly next year.

Subscription: $2-00(Aus) for 4 issues.
Issues 2,3,4,5 still available (40 c each)

Published by: J.Grancharoff,
P.O.Box A425,
Sydney South. N.S.W.
Australia.2000

RED & BLACK

AN ANARCHIST JOURNAL

No. 6 AUTUMN. 1975

CONTENTS

2 Russia 1917: Why Not Anarchism?

15 Wilhelm Reich & Women's Liberation

24 Revolution, Anarchism & Anti-Militarism

30 Credo of a Dissenter

38 Of Student Poverty

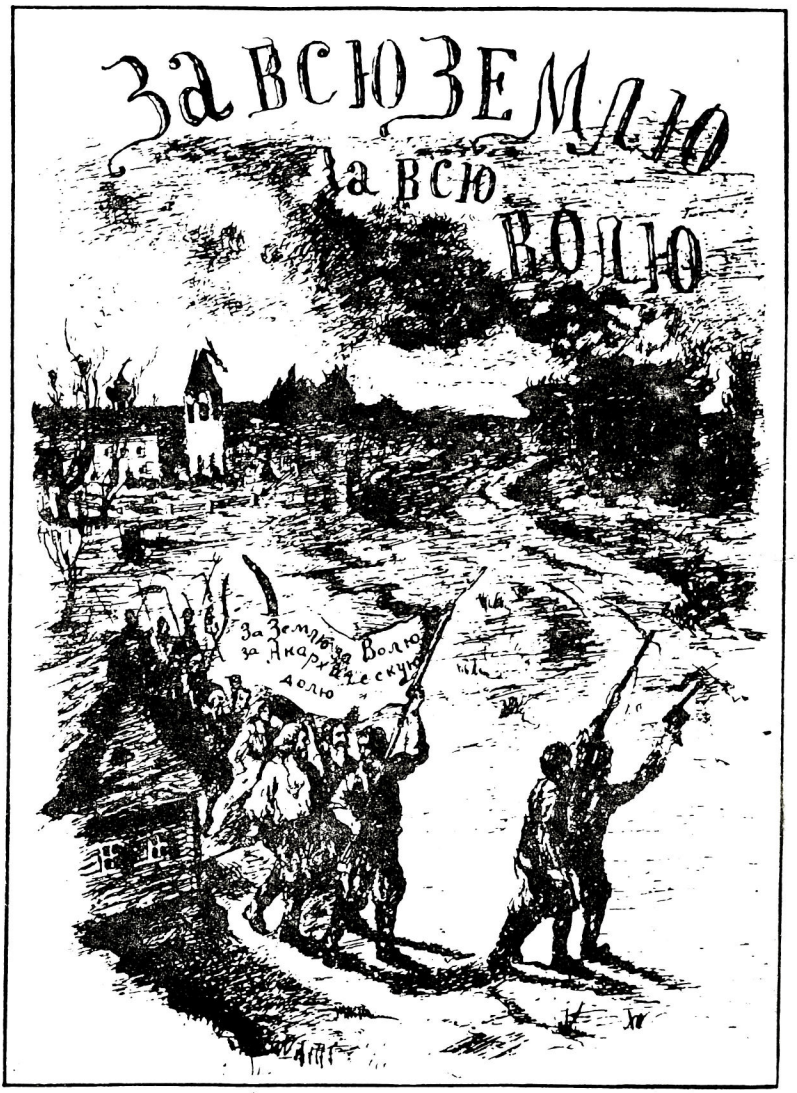
Russia 1917: Why Not Anarchism?

Russia in 1917 was a hybrid society. Whilst there were free peasant farmers outside European Russia the majority of its peasants represented the serfs partially emancipated in 1861. [1] These latter were not independent farmers who might be expected to have developed rapidly to at least a petty bourgeois level of consciousness, but were rather on a medieval plane of consciousness – traditionalist, parochial and zenophobic – and continued to live and work within the confines of the traditional Russian commune or mir. This latter, from which the slavophiles expected the salvation not only of Russia but of the whole world, was not the germ cell of the future socialist commonwealth but rather absolutism's latest and most efficient device for controlling the countryside. [2] The terms of the 1861 emancipation made the villages rather than the individual peasants the owners of the land and the village rather than the individual the responsible agent for the payment of taxes to the government and of redemption dues to the now completely functionless nobility. Nor had the peasantry received all the land; the settlement had given them too little to live on at a time of rising population and to pay their taxes and redemption dues the peasants had to work on the estates of the nobility and the few capitalist farmers.

Industrialisation in Russia did not have the revolutionising effect on the countryside that theories of modernisation usually atribute to it. The surplus needed for capital investment was not obtained by the exchange of consumer and light industrial goods for the products of the countryside but rather the grain surplus was extracted through the system of taxes and redemption payments which forced peasants to continue to work noble estates and sell some of their own product for money. The grain was then sold abroad (even in times of famine) to provide the equipment needed for heavy industry. Thus the effect was an intensification of the feudal/absolutist exploitation of the peasantry rather than an encounter with a new type of society that would foster individualist and non-traditionalist attitudes. A partial consequence of this – and of the antiquated system of land tenure and re-distribution – was the continuing low level of agricultural technique. When it was seen that this threatened the programme of modernisation and capital accumulation deemed necessary for defence reasons, the government changed its agricultural policies but it was too late and the war and revolution reestablished the mir stronger (and more reactionary) than ever.

Since industrialisation had only taken place in isolated areas and there was no unified capitalist market – comodity production for domestic use being predominantly still in the hands of artisans – the social relations of the majority of Russians had remained unchanged. It is no surprise then that it was in Petrograd with its industrial barracks of proletarianised former peasants that the revolutionary impetus was centred. The change in social relationships can be seen in terms of the alteration of a world-view. The peasants in Russia in 1917, or for that matter in 1560, could only be described as xenophobic and ethnocentric. It was the workers, whose peasant world-view had been transformed by urbanisation and proletarianisation, who were capable of attempting a revolution but whether they were capable of succeeding is another question entirely.

Quite evidently Russia was far from a society described by Marx as one where ". . .the concentration of the means of production and the socialisation of the tools of labour has reached the point where they can no longer be contained within their capitalist shell. The shell bursts. . ."[3] The explosion occurred in Russia certainly, but not as a result of the internal contradictions of capitalism. Russian society may have limped along to a complete social and economic stagnation punctuated by peasant revolts; Stolypin's "wager on the strong" may have succeeded in abolishing rural backwardness after several decades; but what Russia could not do was play the great power in a world increasingly dominated by the capitalist West. Technology, effici-



"For Land and Liberty" St. Petersburg, 1905.

ency and organisation inevitably triumphed over asiatic backwardness and aristocratic decadence.

The 1917 Revolution catapulted Russia out of the middle ages into the twentieth century. Psychologically the Russian peasant had remained medieval, i.e. paraochial and xenophobic; the outside world (including capitalism) was seen as both evil and undesirable because it challenged their security, a security not material but rather intimately bound up with the ideological legitimations of the tzarist regime. Neither the revolutionaries who wanted to liberate the peasants nor the liberals who wanted to ameliorate their conditions ever really struck a sympathetic chord in the peasant mind. The former they turned over to the police; the latter were suspect as jews and foreigners. As late as the 1920 famine Red Cross workers and volunteers were attacked and some killed while attempting to distribute food to the starving peasants.[4]

Good and evil were quite clear-cut: the Tsar was good as was the Church and all official authority; Jews, Germans, intellectuals, and city people were all bad both because they were alien and because they represented change and change threatened tradition. Tradition was the basis of Russian authority; overtime legitimacy had become synonymous with it. From the Tsar to the village patriarchy stood as the basis of all authority. In between Russian society was a complex web of rank and class clearly defined and determined from birth. One's rank in society carried with it a set of expectations, world-view, self-image and ideology. Change of any description in this society challenged this intricate and, by 1917, fragile balance of social relationships. Russian society was total; liberalisation was synonymous with revolution.

Tsarism could not have changed; it had to be overthrown. It was too much of a absolutist institution to become liberal anyway. Its rationale was tradition, absolutism and repression; after hundreds of years of ruthless oppression one couldn't lift the lid even lightly or it would explode — which was eventually bound to happen anyway. Just as Vorster cannot at this stage liberalise South Africa without facilitating revolution, tsarist Russia too was paralysed. It was doomed, whilst its institutions and authority were crumbling visibly, to cling to its belief in these as being God-given.

Along with the Tsars the world of the peasantry was crumbling too. A disasterous economic crisis coupled with the war made it impossible for them to continue their traditional way of life. The mass conscriptions and desertions were creating an anormous rural crisis. While many were moving to the cities because of the famine in the countryside many more were returning to their native villages because there was no food in the towns. They had no understanding of or wish to comprehend what was going on. A couple of issues, however, stood out clearly as the sentiments of the peasantry: land reform, food, an end to the war, and a desire for the society to be so reorganised as to allow the peasant farmer to return to his village and live unhindered by "politics".

Anarchism was the anti-thesis of the whole world-view of the peasantry. The basis of a libertarian society is a complete lack of oppression, total self-awareness, lack of xenophobia and a break with patriarchy and religion. It can only function with fully free and responsible individuals who are morally accountable for their actions. None of these elements were present in the world-view of the peasants in 1917. Contrary to a popular belief in the anarchic tendencies of the peasantry they were not libertarian. Outbursts against authority are meaningless unless there is an analysis behind the political action which negates the legitimacy of the power it is rebelling against. Burning down the landlord's castle may seem to be a step in the right direction but only if the aim behind the action is to abolish private property. If the aim of the outburst is merely to transfer the ownership of land the libertarian and social-

ist point of the exercise is not clear and the landlord's castle was usually destroyed because it could not be easily divided among private individuals. Wolf[5] seems to think that the fact that such explosions against authority occur confirms the anarchy innate in the peasantry. What is more likely is that these outbursts confirm the impotence of the peasant to change his circumstances, all he can perceive are his short term interests. When the peasant has no land all he wants is land; when he has land he wants to keep it. His outbursts are more an expression of his desperation and frustration than a revolutionary manifestation against authority or the state. A distrust of government is not necessarily anarchistic; the John Birch Society wants to limit government as much as possible, probably through much the same motivations as the peasants, it is rather an awareness of the individual and communal needs of society and a confidence that they can be met by the people themselves that is anarchism.

The limitations of the Russians are well expressed by Gorky: "The character of the Russian people, moulded both by resistance to despotism and submission to it, engenders an 'anti-authoritarian complex', that is to say a potent element of spontaneous anarchism which has generated periodic explosions throughout history".[6] This "chaotist" trend within the Russian peasantry that is frequently equated with anarchism has historically been the full extent of Russian peasant revolutions. The peasantry after enduring such monstrous oppression eventually rebelled without any comprehensive political theory or any real rise in their own level of consciousness: they attacked the local landlord yet never questioned the institution of tsarism as a whole.

The belief that the Russian people were capable of the massive leap in consciousness from the middle ages to libertarian socialism was an illusion that all anarchists shared but what ground was there to it? This would have been an enormous feat; after centuries of servile oppression by tsarism and Russian orthodox christianity one could not expect the Russian people to be capable of approaching political liberty in an intelligent and creative way. What was happening in Petrograd was seen as largely irrelevant by the peasants once they had got their land, indeed it was irrelevant to them until the breakdown of the tax and market mechanism for extracting grain to feed the cities forced the bolsheviks to send armed detachments to requisition food. Freedom and individuality were irrelevant to the peasant who derived his security and socio-economic status from membership in a patriarchal village community presided over by a council of elders, individualism was not part of the peasant world-view except in the obvious sense that each was out for what he could get in the existing framework. For the workers and soldiers who were really politically conscious it had been a major transformation to step out of their peasant role into one with a far more definite image of themselves as individuals and as citizens.

The anarchists believed that they were appealing to a people crying out for liberty and self-expression. If this was so why was it that the bolsheviks succeeded and not the anarchists? If one compares what the bolsheviks were prepared to offer with what the anarchists could offer one can see what bolshevism was a logical response to the situation. Had the bolsheviks not gained power (and it was touch and go for a while in 1917) then another "total" answer would have succeeded. The measures that needed to be taken for the survival of Russia in 1917 could only be carried out by a power that was efficient to the point of ruthlessness and absolutely confident in the correctness of its actions. What bolshevism was offering was very attractive. They were quite prepared to take control of the situation which is something that the anarchists would never do even though the situation plainly called out for someone to do so. They were going to carry out the long awaited changes: land reform; withdrawal from the war; marriage reform; modernisation of the economy; improve-

ments in public health and education etc.[7] They were prepared to take Russia out of the middle ages into the twentieth century; this they did and this is exactly what was needed.

Bolshevism looked like a doctrine that had all the answers. The bolsheviks inspired confidence. From the outset Lenin convinced the workers that he would look after their interests; he believed it and so did they; who was the Patriarch now? The tight organisation of the bolsheviks enabled the leadership to be in contact with what was happening in the factories and gsrrisons and have a plan of strategy worked out for taking command in any situation. This was the purpose of its military organisation and factory branches; in practice up to October 1917 they tended to push the party leaders forward. June and July 1917 showed this quite clearly. Not only were the bolsheviks not directing the upsurge of radicalism amonst the workers and soldiers in Petrograd, they too were being forced into pursuing a much more radical stance because of pressure from below. The military organisation and the Petrograd central committee were being pushed further and further to the left merely to keep up with the soldiers and workers. The bolsheviks survived the purges that followed the June and July days but the anarchists did not. The failure of such an armed and militant mass of people to overthrow the government must have confirmed to Lenin the need for a central organisation to turn the spontaneous outburst into a revolution. The masses were plainly not yet self-directed; no social revolution had occurred which could make them capable fo concretely visualizing and achieving their class aims.

But why should anything have changed? How much had the bolsheviks themselves achieved a new consciousness? The Marxist attempts to challenge accepted conditioning were largely made on fringes of the bolsheviks by individuals such as Gorky, Lunacharsky and Balabanoff. On issues such as the role of women there were forward-thinking members such as Kollontai who had more astute grasp of the problems of a social revolution yet on the whole such problems were pushed into pidgeon holes for future reference. Lenin's own views on such matters as free love are classic: who indeed "would drink water from a dirty glass soiled with many lips"?[8] The bolsheviks' minds were a product of historical development, of the values of western bourgeois respectability overlaying those of Russian patriarchal autocracy; not surprisingly they abolished one form of government to set up another more efficient but no less tyrannical than tsarism. Their goals were clear-cut and traditional: they would alter the economic basis of society and modernise Russia, that was what was needed. As Lenin said to Berkman, "it is impossible to speak of liberty at this stage of economic development".[9] He should have added "psychological development" which would have been more to the point.

Bolshevism was an authoritarian and voluntaristic doctrine. A strong belief that leadership and will were capable of overcoming the results of centuries of tsarism was a fundamental tenet. Marriage and the family were never challenged to the extent that their survival was imperilled. Despite legal equalisation of the sexes, there was little improvement in the status of women. The attitude of the male communists may be gauged from the following quotation: "it is not surprising that increasing numbers of communists are refusing to marry party comrades, and prefer to marry women outside the party who will remain at home and manage the household. . . if they married communists they would go about in rags and see their children die".[10] The bolsheviks were and remained blind to the paradox of their situation; they did not see that in overthrowing the old society and constructing the new that the way in which they built the new society was in a sense predetermined by the old. Insofar

as they considered this they could only see it in terms of objective economic conditions and not in terms of personality and conditioning.

In many ways the anarchists had a deeper understanding of what was happening and saw that an all-embracing revolution was essential for any real change. They realised that a total social and politcal reorganisation could not come from above but for real change it had to come from the people without coercion and direction from above. It was obvious to them that there was no point in **banning** religion; if the peasants or workers had not transcended a religious world-view for themselves then one could not force them to. Either they would refuse or substitute for religion a secular dogma providing the same feelings of security.[11] The anarchist critique of the bolsheviks was perceptive and astute but it offered no real alternative. Most anarchists, and particularly the anarcho-communists, were ideologically committed to the idea that when the revolution came the masses would spontaneously seize power and organise their revolutionary communes and factory committees. Yet just as the end of the world never came for the millenarians the masses never abolished the state for the anarchists and the latter were left without any role in the revolution.

Begining

Although most anarchists were precarious allies of the bolsheviks up to October both parties were aware of the irreconcilable antagonism between them. After the bolsheviks seized power in October it was obvious that they would not tolerate any threat to their power. The anarchists responded to this in quite diverse ways: many considered the plea for unity in the face of counter-revolution justified and co-operated with the bolsheviks until 1921 or else as did Shatov and Roschin, submerged themselves in the bolshevik party because they considered being part of a bad revolution better than inaction. The syndicalists kep on organising until their unions were banned and they were arrested and exiled; some individualists and anarcho-communists joined the left social-revolutionaries in underground revolutionary terrorist activities and either fled or were eventually shot. Although most of them had had a theoretical awareness of what would happen if the bolsheviks succeeded, they were still stunned by the cheka raids, the mass arrests of anarchists the military

assault on Kronstadt and the bolshevik treachery towards Makhno. Reduced to feeble protest they watched themselves and the revolution being destroyed. They were limited by the belief, so aptly put by Bakunin, that "social change does not depend on a gradual maturation of objective historical factos" but that on the contrary men shape their own destiny, every man already possessed "the impulse for liberty, the passion for equality, that holy instinct for revolt".[12] Their role as anarchist intellectuals was, as Voline put it, to be "radio transmitters disseminating liberatarian ideas to be rejected or put into practice by autonomous workers, councils and peasant communes."[13]

When these autonomous communes failed to arise on any large scale the anarchists were helpless. They did not see why these organisations did not just spring up and they certainly had no intention of organising them themselves. Overemphasising the power of an idea, they believed that one merely had to want independence and freedom to achieve it. It was a naive analysis of human nature and did not account for the fact that spontaneous outbursts never succeeded in revolution.

In the above criticism one is speaking mainly of the individualists and anarcho-communists. The distinction between the two becomes blurred at times but despite their amorphous nature it is possible to distinguish between them in terms of how in touch with reality they were. Anarcho-individualists such as Brovoi and the Gorodin brothers seem to have had a rather mystical view of the revolution. They felt that there was in Russia a throbbing mass ready to overthrow all authority and build a free society. They were influenced by Western thought – Stirner and Tucker – but retained a populist faith in the masses who they considered to be innately free and consequently to desire anarchy. Not surprisingly (and although their rhetoric was completely removed from reality and could not have been further from the concerns of the masses) they were anti-intellectuals.

Whilst sharing the apocalyptic rhetoric of the individualists the anarcho-communists had real links with the working class. Centred in the Vyborg district they were a leading radical influence on the workers in that area and at Kronstadt. Unlike the individualists they were aware of the necessity of organisation and of direct links with the working class and consequently could compete with the bolsheviks on a more realistic level. They were also, of course, "chaotist" elements amongst them such as the "black bands" that would attack bourgeois houses at night, yet overall they were closer to rank and file bolsheviks and workers than were the bolshevik leaders.

The syndicalists too had real links with industry and a comprehensive organisational prescription for revolution. Their principal drawback was that they were too western. Voline, Maximoff and Shapiro had all lived abroad and been influenced by either French syndicalism or by the I.W.W. but as a revolutionary doctrine syndicalism could only appeal to the small proletarian sector of Russian society within which bolshevism was already quite well entrenched (although the leadership of the trade unions was mainly menshevik). Thus the syndicalists success in gaining seven unions was impressive in itself but irrelevant to the great issues of the revolution. The anarcho-communists criticised the syndicalists as western elitists. They argued that the latter, by their concentration on the numberically insignificant proletariat and neglect of the peasants, vagabonds and marginal workers, divided rather than united the revolutionary elements.

The main problem with the anarchists as a whole was that they were relating not to the revolution as it was in reality but rather to the idealised form it assumed in their own minds.[14] They were sure that the Russian people were capable of libertarian socialism and they believed that the revolution was a popular attempt in this direction. Thus when the desired outcome failed to materialise they blamed the bol-

sheviks rather than trying to discover why it was that bolshevism rather than anarchism succeeded. There were of course quite good organisational reasons for the bolsheviks gaining power rather than the anarchists smashing it. When Voline arrived in Rissia in mid-1917 he was amazed to see Petrograd covered in bolshevik propaganda and not one anarchist poster in sight[15], yet for all that the relinguising of revolutionary freedom by the people to the bolsheviks demonstrates more than the inadequacies of the anarchists.

Why would a people who had fought heroically in a revolution for freedom and had overthrown tsarism give in so easily to yet another authoritarian government? Why did the Petrograd workers only produce a stifled protest when Trotsky massacred their "little brothers" in Kronstadt for their demands? Why would the Red Army, whilst refusing to fire on Kronstadt, allow themselves to be severely disciplined while non-political garrisons massacred the erstwhile revolutionary herois of "red" Kronstadt?[16] Soldiers were shot by the Red Army for surrendering to Kronstadt.[17] Why? The workers were aware that they had legitimate claims and that the small gains made by the revolution — factory committees, legal unions, the right to strike, free speech, autonomous soviets, etc. — were being negated by the bolsheviks in the name of the workers' state. Surely the Cheka must have demonstrated a reversion to the old ways of despotism and terror just as the reinstitution of army officers and military discipline must have been familiar to anyone who had experienced tsarist military despotism.

The complete reversion to despotism is indicative of more than incidental historical factors; it points the justice of those earlier commentators who saw in the Russian "soul" a chaotist tendency and an inability to produce anything new without external authority and control. A faith in leadership, lack of confidence, insecurity and inability to take responsibility for initiating new departures were deeply ingrained in the Russian character as a consequence of centuries of patriarchal and autocratic oppression. Solzhenitsyn expresses the situation quite well in his account of how when in Yaraslavl in 1921 representatives of a trade union attempted to persuade workers of the necessity of a union to protect their rights against the administration, the workers were apathetic but when the party representative spoke and rebuked them for their laziness and demanded overtime without pay and other such sacrifices for the revolution they were elated.[18] Solzhenitsyn says that "we spent ourselves in one unrestricted outburst in 1917 and then we hurried to submit. We submitted with pleasure"![19] but it was not so much masochism as a conitioned incapacity to handle freedom. Of course all the examples of submission to the will of the Party can be explained by various specific and isolated determining factors, for example, the massive propaganda campaign against Kronstadt and the massive violence the bolsheviks were ready to use against opponents, but there are too many such incidents not to point to something deeply rooted in the character of the Russian people.

The reality of the situation in 1917 was that there was not a deep cry for liberty from within all men for if there had been the workers would not so quickly have handed over their newly won liberty to the bolsheviks. What the situation in 1917 really called for was the gratification of immediate and pressing material needs. In such a complex situation of internal turmoil, external war and economic breakdown the workers and peasantry had neither the skill, initiative or confidence to meet the demands of the situation. The bolsheviks did.

Before October when the tide of radicalism was running high and Lenin was writing *State and Revolution*, the former bolshevik Goldenberg had charged that Lenin

was proposing himself as candidate for the long vacant throne of Bakunin. After October when the problem was no longer to seize power but to hold on to it, and when the bolsheviks had either to reintroduce order and stability or go under, Lenin quite easily abandoned his anarchist image (which had never deceived the anarchists) and centralised power and authority to meet the overwhelming problems facing both the survival of his government and of Russian society as a whole. The point here is that Lenin was a prgamatist, he consistently responded to the demands of the situation, not directing them or setting the pace except insofar as all his actions were directed towards retaining power for the bolsheviks. Opposition had to be crushed if they were to retain power and the workers would not have allowed such despotism as the Cheka to rule had they not also felt it to be right at the time.

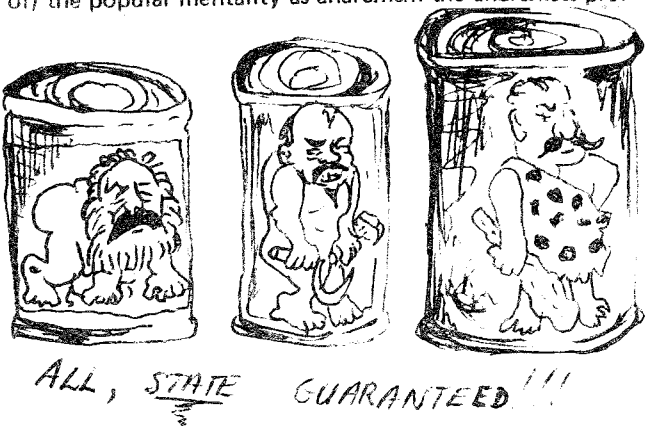
For the anarchists responsibility lay with the workers and peasants. Power had to be won by them and then destroyed. Anarchism failed because the call for total freedom was far from the more pressing concerns moving the majority of the workers and peasants but the fundamental error of the anarchists was that they did not see that this **had** to be so. Libertarian society was an impossibility in Russia in 1917. Whilst the anarchists correctly perceived that bolshevism meant authoritarianism and that there was no freedom under any state they lacked the perception to see that we are all products of our historical and cultural background and that unless there can develop a movement that challenges the totality of the old society (as Spanish anarchism might be thought to have done) revolutions can only continue the old society in the shell of the new.

Yet even if the anarchists had perceived this they would still have been trapped into inaction. They could not support leninism without jettisoning anarchism and so they had to oppose the bolsheviks with the tragic result of absolute elimination. Their valiant attempts to expose bolshevism fell on deaf ears because there was no alternative to offer. The Russian people were not equipped or prepared to assume control of their own lives and it was not so hard to surrender something as abstract as liberty for psychological security and the fulfillment of basic material needs.

Epilogue

The burden of the argument above is that the specific character of the Russian peasantry precluded a libertarian solution in 1917. The deficiencies of the anarchists — quantitative, qualitative and organisational — were also important but these are susceptible of a similar analysis. (Russian peasants and Russian anarchists were afterall both products of Russian history.) In order to give such an analysis we have broken with the peculiarly Russian and anarchistic conception of all men everywhere and at all times being equally capable of freedom and have proceeded from the viewpoint that what people are capable of is a function of their total history. For dealing with questions of classes and peoples this means that the socio-economic structure of a society, its history and culture are the determinants of mass consciousness and that this consciousness can only be changed by the impact of ideas external to the society or by the unification and generalisation of individual oppositional viewpoints arising from the specific life histories of individuals (which may well differ within the society. Both of these processes of consciousness change will be slow except in periods of rapid socio-economic-political change which disrupt traditional patterns of thought. It seems to us that one of the many failings of Russian anarchism was that it was anti-enlightenment and anti-intellectual. For this reason it did not constitute a challenge to the popular mentality and hence could not form a component of a development towards a libertarian and socialist consciousness. By identifying

(idealised parts of) the popular mentality as anarchism the anarchists prev nted the



development of a genuine revolutionary consciousness. At most they encouraged chaotist tendencies.

In this Russian anarchism contrasts sharply with Spanish anarchism. Spanish anarchism was the enlightenment on Spanish soil despite the fact that it was purest Bakuninism and hence had other tendencies as well. Spanish anarchism stood for literacy, science and popular education; it looked forward to the modern world and was not adverse to spelling out its social programme and organising to implement it. Spanish anarchism was at worst insurrectional but never chaotist. The Spaniards revolted for an idea; they did not rebel through accumulated resentment and oppression.

The Spanish peasant also differed from the Russian peasant. At the time that Russia was making the transition from feudalism to an asiatic absolutism Spain was already an insipiently bourgeois society. Its economy was ruined in the price revolution caused by the discovery of gold in Spanish America byt this also gave its people a very different history from the Russian one. It is impossible to give a detailed analysis here but several facts relevant to an analysis of Spanish anarchism – which is usually dismissed as a peasant phenomenon – should be mentioned. Firstly certain Spanish rural and fishing communities had maintained cooperative economics since the middle ages. (The Russian mir held the land in common but was a private economy.) Secondly even in rural Spain anarchism seems to have been based on towns – although villages also had resident propagandists and on occasions were totally anarchist. Thirdly, and probably as a result of continuous propaganda, rural anarchism transformed the countryside in a collectivist direction in 1936 wherever it was powerful. This was a very different thing from what happened in 1917 in Russia.

There were also important differences between the Russian and Spanish proletariats. In part these stemmed from their formation from different peasantries but in part also from the effect of anarchist propaganda and organisation. For anarchist writers the high point of the Russian revolution is often the formation of the factory committees and the seizure of the factories from below in 1917-18. What should be noted here is that as well as being the form of industrial organisation closest to the revolutionary workers the factory committee was also the most primitive form. One suspects that in many cases the seizure of the factory by the workers corresponded to the seizure of the land by the peasants in being the end point of their action rather than the first stage in a social reorganisation. Certainly one hears little of

inter-factory or industry organisation from below except among the syndicalists. The

factory committees either didn't think of it or were leaving it to the state. Here again one has a striking contrast with Spain where the unions seized industries through their local committees. The problem in Spain was the avoidance of autonomist, i.e. capitalist, tendencies in industries rather than in individual plants and this was much more susceptible of a solution by the revolutionary organs involved.

We hope that anarchists will reflect on these differences and come to see firstly, the necessity of comprehensive organisational[20] and constructive propaganda work, and, secondly, the complete falsity of the received anarchist doctrine that 1917 was a libertarian revolution aborted by the authoritarians.

REFERENCES

1 Most of the free peasants other than special ethnic groups represented the descendants of serfs who had emigrated eastwards to escape the pressure of the state and nobility.

2 It is worth quoting Bakunin's letter of 1866 to Herzen on the character of the Great-Russian commune (and hence of the peasantry composing it): "Why has this commune, from which you expect such wonders in the future, failed to bring about, in the course of ten centuries of its existence, anything but heinous slavery? The odious putridity and the complete injustice of patriarchal habits, the absence of freedom for the individual in face of the mir, the stifling pressure which that mir exercises, killing every possibility of personal initiative, depriving its members not only of juridicial rights but of single justice in its decision. . ., the ruthless severity of its attitude towards every weak and poor member, its systematic oppression of those members who display the slightest independence, and its readiness to sell out truth and justice for a pail of vodka. " (Quoted in Lampert *Studies in Rebellion*. p. 147.)

3 Berkman quoted in Maximoff *The Guillotine at Work*. p. 60.

4 In 1921 after Kronstadt and the start of the New Economic Policy Victor Serge and some friend who were at a loss to know what to do found a large estate north of Petrograd near Lake Ladaga of several hundred acres with a landlord's residence. The estate had been abandoned because the peasants would not agree to run it collectively; they demanded that it be shared out amongst them. Two chairmen of the short-lived commune had been murdered there in 8 months. The village boycotted Serge's group when they came there. Everything they had was stolen and the peasants refused to sell anything to the "jews" and "antichrists". The blockade was broken when one of the group, a tolstoyan doctor wearing a gold cross on his breast, went to the village and bought eggs from one of the villagers, saying "We are christians too, little sister". After that they were accepted. (Serge *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*. p. 149.)

5 In Shanin *Peasants and Peasant Society*. p. 272

6 Quoted in Serge *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*. p. 121

7 The degree to which reform was needed may be illustrated by Lunacharsky's remark to Goldman that some teachers still favoured prison for mental defectives. See *Living my Life*. p. 758.

8 See his letter to Klara Zetlin in T. Deutscher *Not by Politics Alone*. pp. 222-3.

9 Avrich (ed) *The Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*. p. 130. Bukharin also made this point: "Proletarian compulsion in all its forms, beginning with summary execution and ending with compulsory labour is, however paradoxical it may seem, a method of re-working the human material of the capitalist epoch into communist humanity " See Berkman in *Anarchy 2*.

10 Fuelop-Miller *The Mind and Face of Bolshevism*. p. 217. (Quoted from an unnamed bolshevik.)

11 "Only a few versts from Moscow in Ivar government region a woman found a bit of wood which possessed the peculiar property of shining in the night. She immediately imagined this chip to be a sign of God, nay God itself, she prayed to the wood and as the news spread other peasants began to worship the new God. On receiving information of this from the priest the Government finally sent 300 soldiers, who attacked the village with a machine gun in an attempt to deprive the peasants of this piece of wood. But the peasants armed themselves, repulsed the attack and captured the gun, and it cost the authorities a great deal of trouble before they finally got possession of this peculiar 'God'. It now adorns a glass case in a museum in North Russia" Feulop-Miller, *Op. cit.*, p. 218. Museums of atheism could hardly have any impact on this sort of peasantry – particularly since they would never see a museum.

12 Quoted in Avrich *The Russian Anarchists*. pp. 21-2.

13 Voline *Nineteen Seventeen*. p. 16.

14 The problem with the anarchists was that they tended to see the revolution as a unified phenomenon: a massive and popular libertarian upsurge. Despite their considerabel talent for ideological self-deception the bolshevik leaders did not and if they had they could not possibly have seized and held power. In his 1916 article "The results of the discussion on self-determination" Lenin polemicised against the idea that there would ever be a "pure" social revolution and stressed that without the participation of petty bourgeois elements and "backward" workers mass struggle and revolution (i.e. the seizure of power) were impossible.

15 Voline *Nineteen Seventeen*. p. 14.

16 Ida Mett *The Kronstadt Commune*. p. 22.

17 *Ibid*. p. 23.

18 Solzhenitsyn *Gulag Archipelgo*. p. 13.

19 *Ibid*. p. 14.

20 Not of course that we are partisans of the leninist view – later adopted by Makhno and others in exile – that organisation overcomes all material obstacles.

NO MAN
IS GOOD ENOUGH
TO BE
ANOTHER MAN'S
MASTER

Wilhelm Reich and Women's Liberation

by A. J. Baker

Wilhelm Reich, at least in his Marxist-Freudian days, was the outstanding example there has been of a libertarian socio-sexual theorist. He made the first and still the most serious attempt to study the psychology of sexual intercourse, he added a new sexual dimension to Marx's theory of ideology, and he laid the foundations for the theory of the interconnection between sex and politics that has been publicized by recent Women's Liberation writers.

In this exposition I want to deal, first with a main area of agreement and then with a specific point of disagreement, between Reich's views and those of Women's Liberationists.

1. In Reich's general view there is a close connection between political repression and secual repression. From this arises the neurotic and guiltridden sexual life of so many people and along with this the discrepancy between sexual ideology and sexual practice. No genuine solution of these conflicts is possible unless there is an overall change in existing society. "In authoritarian society, the conflict between a morality which is imposed on total society by a minority in the interests of maintaining its power on the one hand, and the sexual needs of the individual on the other, leads to a crisis which – within the existing social framework – is insoluble."[1] That is why ordinary sexual reformers – like reformers in other fields – offer palliatives instead of real solutions; they don't go to the heart of the matter, which is to criticize the social and sexual role of **marriage** and **the family.**

In thus taking up a revolutionary position critical of the family and its analogue, "compulsive monogamy", Reich parted company with Freud and his conservative psychoanalytic followers. Reich had learnt a great deal from Freud, but as well as rightly deploring the way in which Freud sheered away from the subversive implications of his (Freud's) early sexual theory of the neuroses, Reich soon saw that what Freud most lacked was a solid social theory to underpin his psycho-sexual views. This lack Reich made good by studying Marx. But while he endorsed the broad features of Marx's position – notably theory of socio-economic conditions, classes, ideology, and the need for revolution – Reich himself made an original contribution to Marxism by pointing out the influence on ideology-formation of sexual and psychological factors.

Reich developed this view while criticizing German Marxist-Communists of the early 1930's, but it has a general and topical relevance. Thus, in *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, he complains that German Marxists paid all attention to "objective" socio-economic processes and none to **ideology**. They "failed to take into account the character structure of the masses and the social effect of mysticism".[2] Instead they took up the standpoint of "vulgar Marxism" which "sets up a mechanical anti-

thesis between economy and ideology, between 'structure' and 'superstructure', it makes ideology rigidly and one-sidedly dependent upon economy, and fails to see the dependency of economic development upon that of ideology".[3] Given Marx's position, the important question we should ask is how the conversion of economic factors into ideological consciousness is in fact achieved. The answer is found by studying the circumstances which affect man's psychic life – "the 'subjective factor' which the vulgar Marxist had failed to comprehend".[4] Consider, for example, how a given ideology can get out of line with and lag behind a more advanced basis (as in Germany in 1933). The explanation lies in the "psychic" or "character" structures of most of the workers and their wives. "The basic traits of the character structures corresponding to a definite historical situation are formed in early childhood and are far more conservative than the forces of technical production."[5]

Reich goes on to point out that in the development of these character structures, sexual suppression and repression have the greatest significance. If we ask why sexuality is suppressed by society and repressed by the individual we find there is no lack of answers – to save our souls (the Church), the expression of man's moral nature (moral philosophers), to make "culture" possible (the Freudians). In fact these answers are all forms of illusory camouflage; the main social function the subjugation of sexuality actually has is to fortify the process of ideological conditioning, and so help to preserve the existing class structure. As Reich sums it up:

> **The interlacing of the socio-economic structure with the sexual structure of society and the structural reproduction of society takes place in the first four or five years and in the authoritarian family.** The Church only continues this function later. Thus, the authoritarian state gains an enormous interest in the authoritarian family: **It becomes the factory in which the state's structure and ideology are moulded.**[6]

If we ask what place **women** have in this process, the answer is that they have a decisive socio-sexual role. Women more than men, Reich points out, are subject to the full weight of both economic and sexual suppression and it is harder for them to withstand psychic and ideological pressures. As a result they become key vehicles for the transmission and reinforcement of conservative ideologies. In accounting for the widespread subjugation of women (and adolescents) Reich draws an interesting contrast between the influence of economic and sexual forces. Economic distress does generate political opposition – so that if sexual distress worked in the same way "the majority of adolescents and the majority of women would have to be far more rebellious than the majority of men".[7] In fact they are not, and sexually oppressed women, for example, are usually politically reactionary. "The explanation is: The suppression of one's primitive material needs compasses a different result than the suppression of one's sexual needs. The former incites to rebellion, whereas the latter – inasmuch as it causes sexual needs to be repressed, withdraws them from consciousness and anchors itself as a moral defence – prevents rebellion against **both** forms of suppression."[8]

Reich also notes that even women who are politically emancipated have special problems to face: "Many women who are revolutionary at work are not revolutionary at home, principally because their moral and cultural attitudes militate against their critical faculty and their economic and sexual interests".[9] The development of revolutionary consciousness is especially difficult for women. Talk about "integration into the production process", "an end to dependence on men", "winning control over one's own body" are often mere phrases which achieve little. The trouble is that even "emancipated" women have a "strong tendency towards bondage that is reinforced by some characteristic fears: fear of the loss of the husband as the pro-

vider, a fear of having no legally sanctioned sexual partner, and a fear of a free life in general. But despite this fact that it is much harder for women to free themselves from subservience, in anticipation of Women's Liberation Reich saw that: "It is nonetheless perfectly true that the wish for economic independence from the male, and above all for sexual independence, are the most important components of the class-consciousness of women."[10]

Reich's general theory has had much influence on Women's Liberation writers. Germaine Greer, for example, writes with approval of Reich's description of the authoritarian family as "part and parcel, and, at the same time prerequisite, of the authoritarian state and of authoritarian society",[11] and the same view has been endorsed by Kate Millett and Shulamith Firestone. All three writers have also referred favourably to Reich's account (in *The Sexual Revolution*) of how, in Soviet Russia, the rapid growth of political authoritarianism under Stalin was accompanied by a parallel growth of sexual authoritarianism.

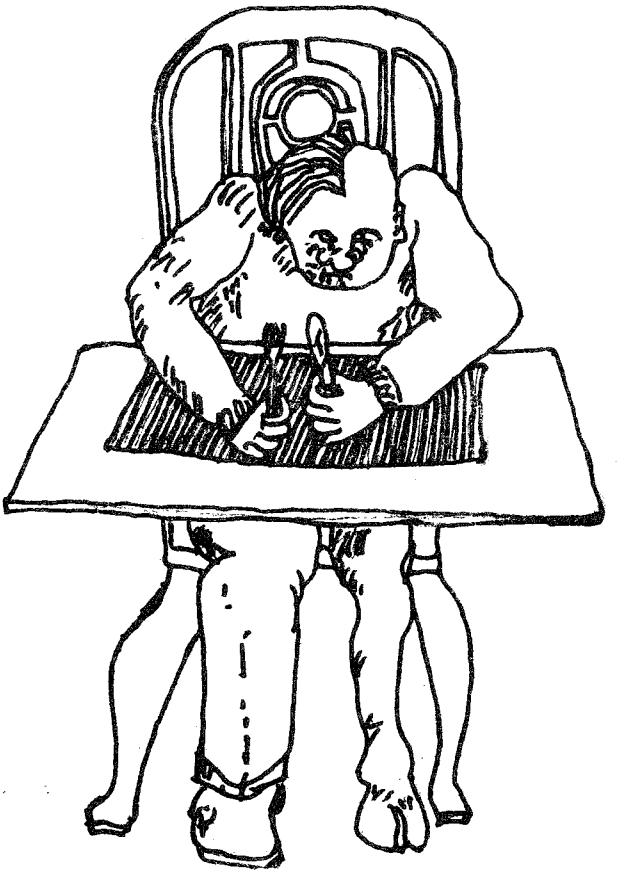
In addition, as well as enlarging on Reich's account of the processes by which women, in particular, are kept subservient – compare, for example, Firestone's discerning appraisal of how the idea of romantic love is a form illusory ideology imposed on women – Women's Liberationists have gone further and stated a powerful case on the need for, and potential consequences of, the liberation of women. Women, they claim, are the most oppressed as well as the largest of all oppressed social groups, so their need for liberation is plain; but the way to liberation lies in the elimination of marriage and the family, and if and when this is achieved a totally different, better and freer society will be inaugurated. This conclusion about women is not one that Reich himself drew, but it is a conclusion that may be said to flow from his premises. If women, as mothes and daughters in the authoritarian nuclear family, are both victims of and key transmitters to the young of reactionary ideologies, it follows that the cause of revolution will be greatly strengthened if women can, in sufficient numbers, succeed in developing revolutionary consciousness and as a result in freeing themselves from the authoritarian family, and as a result of this in turn in helping to undermine authoritarian society.

There are, however, variations in the views put forward by Women's Liberationists and Reich would certainly have disagreed with some of them. He would, of course, have been critical of merely reformist Liberationists, but as well would have disagreed with a pro-revolutionist like Firestone. She sees women as a fully fledged separate class, the sexual oppression of which, she apparently believes, underlies and is more fundamental than the economic structure to which Marx referred. But Reich, a pluralist Marxist who rejected the reductionist view of the "economists" and "vulgar Marxists" that economic structure is the sole influential historical factor, would have been no less critical of Firestone's candidate for this kind of historical influence – the sexual oppression of women. In Reich's view it is principally the **combination** of economic and sexual factors that props up authoritarian society; so a Reichian-Women's Liberation theory of revolution must pay attention to both factors: the liberation of women, including their liberation from illusory and unconscious ideology, may well be a new catalysing force that will make revolution in advanced society possible (as well as helping to guard against bureaucratic-authoritarian developments after the revolution), but any such force will need to be allied with economic – and male – liberationist forces; revolutionary liberation, if it comes, will involve **human** – and not merely women's – liberation.

2. Reich, particularly in *The Function of the Orgasm*, advances a theory of genital sexuality according to which there is a "qualitative difference between genital-

ity and pre-genitality. **Only the genital apparatus can provide orgasm and can discharge sexual energy completely**" [12] What he calls "orgastic potency" is not the same as ordinary potency – and it is a concept that applies to women as much as to men. For example, he found that "those men who bragged the loudest about their sexual conquests and about how many times a night they 'could do it' "[13] were erectively very potent but not **orgastically** potent. With these men, and with women who were lacking in orgastic potency, "an exact analysis of the phantasies accompanying the act revealed mostly sadistic or self-satisfied attitudes in the men, anxiety reserve or masculinity in women. To the so-called potent man, the act had the significance of conquering, piercing or raping the woman".[14] In contrast, with orgastic potency, there is a mutual capacity for surrender, and a spontaneous progress in the course of the sexual act from a voluntary to an involuntary phase. Moreover, "the activity of the woman normally differs in no way from that of the man. The widely prevalent passivity of the woman is pathological and mostly due to the masochistic phantasies of being raped".[15] With both sexes, when there is orgastic potency, "the orgasm is more intense if the peaks of genital excitation coincide. This occurs frequently in individuals who are able to concentrate their tender as well their sensual feelings on a partner"[16] – though there is a distinction between this sort of tenderness and the situation where, owing to false neurotic transference, the partner is excessively idealized and illusions predominate.

Women's Liberationists do not disagree with Reich when he maintains that women need not be passive and that they are just as capable of sexual arousal and enjoyment



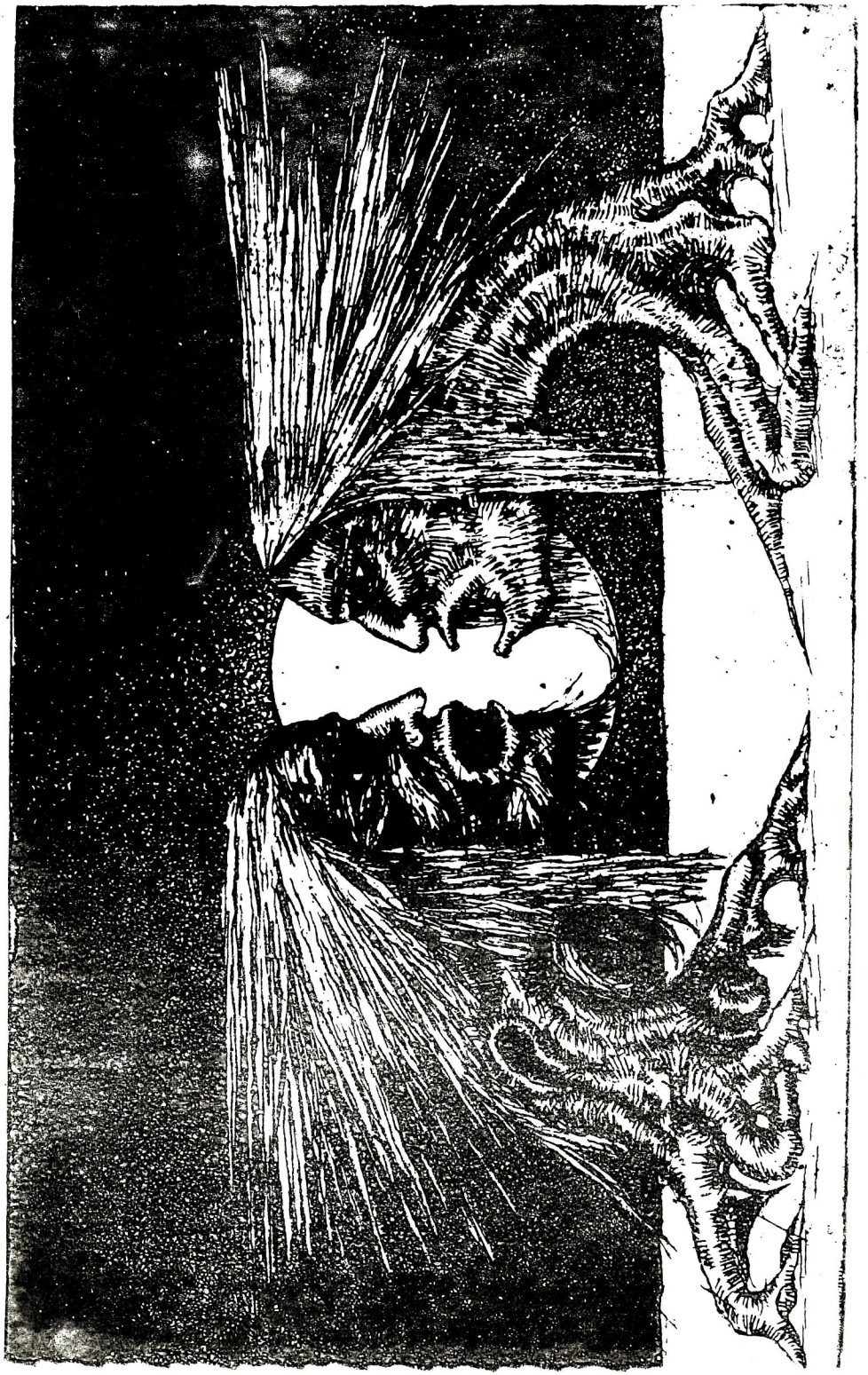
as men. But disagreement does arise over the nature of the female orgasm. Reich differentiates between the vaginal orgasm and the clitoral orgasm and uses the distinction to complete a parallel he makes between men and women. Thus, setting aside those men who are completely impotent or completely fixated on pre-genital impulses, he draws a contrast within the class of men who engage in genital intercourse between those men whose gratification is normally inhibited or incomplete (as e.g. happens with "onanistic coitus") and those men who are able to achieve orgastic potency. In a parallel way, then, he draws a contrast amongst genitally awakened women between those who commonly have more localized clitoral orgasms and those who are able to achieve vaginal orgasms.

The question whether there are both vaginal and clitoral orgasms is fraught with controversy, not to speak of ideology and emotionalism. Writers like Anne Koedt[17] have been very trenchant in denying the existence of the vaginal orgasm but unfortunately the main argument they rely on is that that sort of orgasm is a myth invented by the woman-belittling theorist, Freud, and sponsored by men generally because penis penetration in the vagina suits their sexual interests best – which is an argument that gives a new edge to the name of the logical fallacy it involves: **argumentum ad hominem.**

Freud and the Fruedians have been much berated as male chauvinists by Women's Liberationists (though Reich, despite his belief in the vaginal orgasm, has mostly been kindly treated and not singled out for attack – no doubt because of recognition of the force of his other views). But if we do consider as a specific issue the attitude and influence of Freud and the Freudian the position is not as simple as is made out. Many Freudians may have been depreciators of women the effect of whose analysis was to keep women in their place – compare, for instance, Firestone's telling citations of Theordore Reik's glib misunderstandings of women's problems. It is also true that some Freudians, especially in the U.S.A., were very influential in propagating the idea of the vaginal orgasm – with harmful effects for those women for whom this turned out to be an unattainable experience. But as Reich has emphasized there were other Freudians with a different view on this question. These are the Freudians he criticized for taking a pro-male view of sex, as when they held that clitoral orgasms were enough for women, or as when Roheim "went so far as to state that 'with a slight exaggeration one could say that the woman obtains real gratification only if after the sexual act she suffers from an inflammation (of the genital)' ".[18] Here, as an illustration of the confusions and misalliances that are rife, we have ineffect, on one side, certain male chauvinist analysts, together with vocal Women's Liberationists, endorsing the clitoral orgasm! Furthermore, so far as Freud himself is concerned, it is an obvious distortion to lump him in general with the worst of his followers, and on the specific question of Freud's view of women it is by no means evident that his critics can substantiate their charge that he was concerned to depreciate women and their sexual enjoyment.[19]

Returning to the question of types of orgasms, if the subject as issue is where nerve endings are located then it is plainly the clitoris, not the vagina, that is the woman's excitable organ. As Kate Millett expresses it, "A distinction must be made between the locus of arousal and the locus of response. The seat of response is the clitoris which triggers other responses (the enlargement of the labia majora, the flow of transudate, vaginal spasms, etc.)".[20] But given that the clitoris is the sine qua non, there can be important variations in the quality of the orgasms obtained. This is conceded by Millett when she declares, "While there is no 'vaginal orgasm' per se, there is of course vaginal coitus (and probably one of a different experiential character

than that produced by exclusively clitoral stimulation)".[21] Germaine Greer makes



the same contrast more sharply – indeed in a quite Reichian way – when she wri 's:

> There is no substitute for excitement: not all the massage in the world will ensure satisfaction, for it is a matter of psycho-sexual release. Real gratification is not enshrined in a tiny cluster of nerves but in the sexual involvement of the whole person. Women's continued high enjoyment of sex, which continues after orgasm, observed by men with wonder, is not based on the clitoris, which does not respond particularly well to continued stimulus, but on a general sensual response. If we localise female response in the clitoris we impose upon women the same limitation of sex which has stunted the male's response.[22]

As she also expresses it (in criticism of Anne Koedt): "At all events a clitoral orgasm with a full cunt is nicer than clitoral orgasm with an empty one, as far as I can tell at least. Besides, a man is more than a dildo."[23]

In the light of these distinctions the question at issue becomes virtually a semantic question. If vaginal orgasms are supposed to be ones that take place quite independently of the clitoris – as was assumed by those psychoanalysts who encouraged their patients to proscribe or repudiate the clitoris) then there are no vaginal orgasms. But given that there are various forms or degrees of orgasms all of which involve the clitoris: clitoral orgasm 1 (aroused and located in the clitoris), clitoral orgasm 2 (involving vaginal spasms), etc., we have the semantic option of differentiating clitoral orgasm 2 by describing it simply as "vaginal orgasm". The point of so describing it, of course, is to mark, as Reich wanted to do, the difference between this more pervasive, more intense experience associated with the vagina, and the sort of orgasm (clitoral orgasm 1) that is localized in the clitoris.

Notwithstanding these evident distinctions, there are some critics who continue to vociferously counter-assert against Reich that genital orgasms are inferior to other forms of sexual pleasure and, indeed, that Women's Liberation spells the end of genital sexuality.

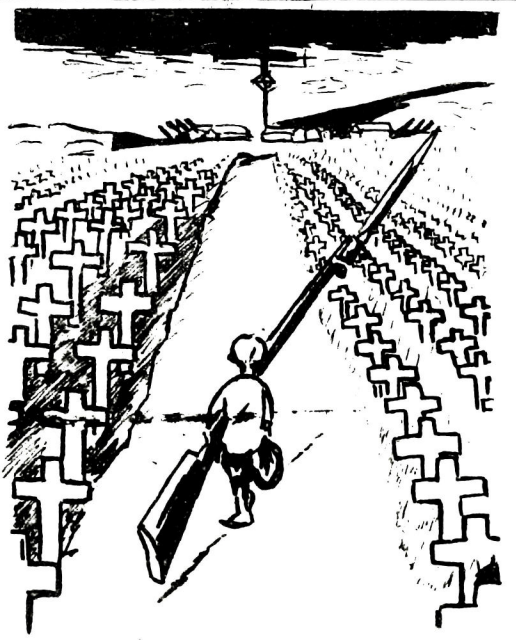
Now there is a way in which a guarded defence of this position may be canvassed. Shulamith Firestone does so in an interesting way when she contends[24] that in the future what may well come to be the norm is "a healthy transexuality", superseding the sick forms of both heterosexuality and homosexuality that prevail today, and not involving the differences between masculine and feminine personalities as we know them today. This, she conjectures, is a situation that will arise given the abolition of the family and present forms of repression, for in that case the undifferentiated pre-genital sex drive (Freud's "polymorphous perversity") would run free instead of being repressed in favour of genital sexuality. Under these circumstances, she argues, we can only guess what exact form sexual relations would take. "All other things being equal, people might still prefer those of the opposite sex simply because it is more convenient. But even this is a large assumption."

Here Firestone is envisaging a society in which, as a result of specific changes in conditions, there has been a psycho-sexual transformation and genitality, as we understand, is no longer dominant – though just possibly, she does concede, the sexual relation of penis in vagina will still obtain. This view, though highly speculative, does have something offered in support of it, and I refer to it in order to contrast with it, in respect of realism, the view of those who claim that genital sexuality has **now** been discredited and that no truly emancipated woman ought to permit penis penetration of her vagina. Adherents of that extravagant view would do well to reflect on Marx's distinction between historical or real conditions of emancipation and merely phantastic ones. The fact is that in present society genital sexuality is widespread (and if the family, as Reich advocated, does go out of existence it is by no

means evident, despite Firestone, that genitality will cease to prevail). Given that, Reich's insights and submissions are valuable and to the point in distinguishing between genital activities and attitudes which are neurotic or obstructed and those which are not. It would also be regrettable, from Reich's point of view, if those women who are genitally oriented are induced, by Women's Liberation ideology of the kind noted, to deprive themselves of genital enjoyment.

REFERENCES

1 *The Sexual Revolution*, 4th ed., p. 30.
2 *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, revised trans. 1970, p.5.
3 *Op. cit.*, p.14.
4 *Op. cit.*, p. 16.
5 *Op. cit.*, p. 18.
6 *Op. cit.*, p. 30.
7 *Op. cit.*, p. 31.
8 *Ibid.*
9 "What is Class-Consciousness?", English trans., *Liberation*, October, 1971, p. 28.
10 *Ibid.*
11 *The Female Eunuch*, p. 238.
12 *The Function of the Orgasm*, Panther Books, p. 141.
13 *Op. cit.*, p. 112.
14 *Ibid.*
15 *Op. cit.*, pp. 115-16.
16 *Op. cit.*, p. 120.
17 *The Myth of Vaginal Orgasm.*
18 *Op. cit.*, p. 111.
19 For a persuasive defence of Freud, see J.R. Maze, "Germaine Greer's Misinterpretations of Freud", Sydney Liertarian *Broadsheet*, No.67, January, 1972.
20 *Sexual Politics*, p. 117.
21 *Ibid.*
22 *Op. cit.*, p. 43.
23 *Op. cit.*, p. 307.
24 *The Dialectic of Sex*, p. 66.



Revolution, Anarchism and Anti-Militarism.

by Bart de Ligt

Bart de Ligt was a prominent Dutch anarchist and anti-militarist whose years of activity were before, during and after the First World War. A book of his, translated into English under the title **The Conquest of Violence**, *has been quite influential among pacifists in English-speaking countries.*

The essay here translated, which appeared the first time in **Der Syndikalist** *for 1924, has been taken from* **Kerk, Cultuur en Samenleving: Tien Jaar Strijd** *(Church, culture and society: ten years of struggle), published in Arnhem in 1925. It is of interest especially for its early acute insight into bolshevism, its emphasis on the subjective factor in revolution and its criticism of the people and refusal to set them upon a pedestal.*

For long enough now we have accused the bourgeoisie and blamed it for the character of modern society. Certainly its social role has been anything but admirable. Despicable and worthless, it has lived wildly, arbitrarily and unrestrainedly, pitilessly oppressing and exploiting the great mass of people and driving them to war in order to make profit after profit.

At last this could no longer be endured and in central and eastern Europe the common people became rebellious. They arose and in the east drove out the ruling class.

But now, in the Ukraine, Russia and Siberia, the old capitalism returns in a new form. The state is mighty once more and the army grows enormously.

Why? Because the proletariat is in no shape to fulfil its task, which is to become a real social actor, to rule nature and society and order them rationally.

In Germany, where in 1918 thrones toppled and the ruling class momentarily lived in trepidation, the old system is kept going in new forms by the everlasting cooperation of the social- and bourgeois-democrats.

Why; Because the proletariat was in no shape to give birth to a new society.

"A people has the government it deserves." The people must therefore be held responsible: after all, they tolerate all this!

A free people has no government. When will the modern proletariat, this beast of burden enslaved to war and work, throw off its rider, raise its head, stand upright, refuse any longer to be coerced and governed — in short, when will it become human?

That is the great revolutionary question. For revolution is not just negative – overthrowing and destroying – but positive – building up and renewing. Social revolution, as Marx, too, recognized, comes after revolution in men themselves. A new social order is made possible by subjective factors: new insight, new understanding, new aspiration, a firm, deep and truly human conviction. Objective factors – the old land and means of production – are there in abundance. Even before the World War capitalist society had ripened enough to be technically ready for socialist transformation. It was the subjective factor, the human factor, that was inadequate

So the old ruling class was once again damned to mastery by proletarian moral and technical incompetence. It rules and governs without the slightest responsibility.

I am not accusing. I am stating facts. But I want to do much more than make a diagnosis: I want to awaken the proletariat to a new respect for itself and to a new power of action.

That is why the proletariat must be held responsible. Our time calls, as never before, aon all that is best in the proletariat, but if it does not arise, if it fails to free itself decisively from the madness of bourgeois rule, then it will degenerate and go to wrack and ruin along with the bourgeoisie.

The power the ruling class has over the proletariat is inward, not outward, is dependent on "respect", "belief", "self-subordination" and "humility". The ruling class is potent because it has known how to use passive militarism to make the proletariat impotent. For there are two sides to militarism: on the one hand it is active, imperious, unscrupulously domineering and on top of things; on the other hand it is passive, unscrupulously obedient and down at the bottom. The common people are inspired with a spirit of blind and slavish willingness to serve.

Church, factory, barracks, school, office, prison, press, cinema, political party: they all cause this to be so. Certainly a hundred thousand good souls work themselves into a state of indignation about it all, but that does not free the people. The people's liberation can only be self-liberation. The proletariat must be its own messiah.

Self-liberation means more than occupying the workplace. It means occupying workplaces — and controlling them. Socialism is first of all a matter of the free and rational control of production. It is a matter of practical and comradely cooperation to satisfy the needs of a society become human. It is a matter of building a new inner and outer discipline. Socialism means a symphony of solidary freedom.

And that is why socialism can only be mastery-less (anarchistic). There is no place for comradeship where mastery exists. When mastery is accepted, new forms of oppression and exploitation always arise. The tyrant grows, his roots in the slave. There, where priests, leaders and dictators speak for you, where ministers, bureaucrats and officers decide for you, without you and about you, that is where socialism cannot live, that is where socialism dies in the bud. There, where the interests of a reified group get put before shared interests, where humanity and human nature are uncared for, where the interests of one's own nation alone are considered and all others ruthlessly subordinated, that is where no International can arise capable of freeing the world from war between races, classes and countries.

From the means used one learns the goal. Whatever the professed goal, the real goal is defined inescapably by the character of the means used.

The bourgeoisie's political methods are those of Machiavelli and Loyola.

Social-democracy's political methods are those of Machiavelli and Loyola.

Bolshevism's political methods are those of Machiavelli and Loyola.

Social-democracy's methods are bourgeois.

Bolshevism's methods are bourgeois and pre-bourgeois.

The state of the bourgeois- and social-democrats is bourgeois.

The state of the bolsheviks is a bourgeois and pre-bourgeois institution in revolutionary disguise, which goes the whole hog with bourgeois and pre-bourgeois, feudal and pre-feudal methods.

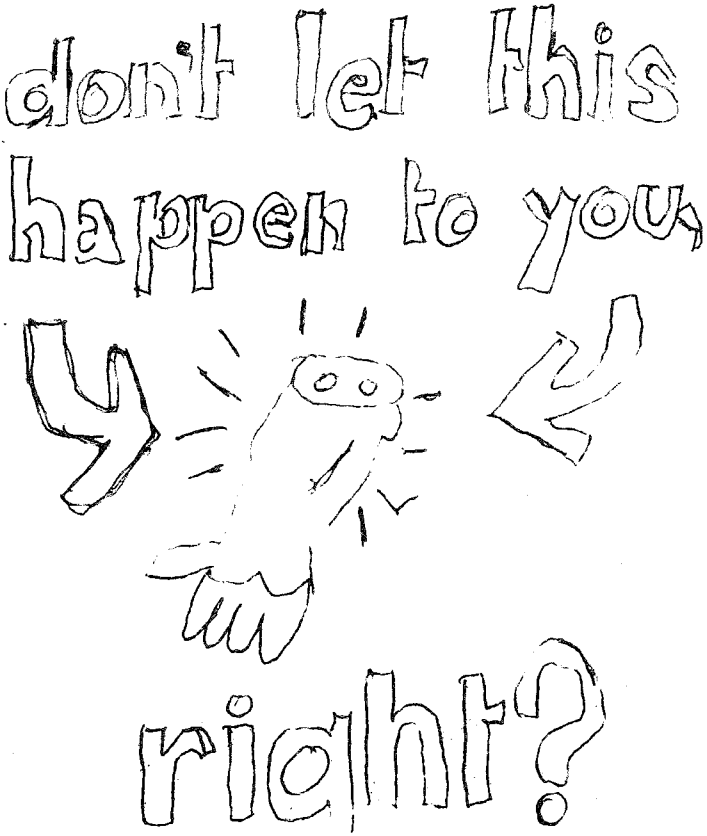
The bolshevik army is bourgeois. It was revolutionary in the beginning when the Russian revolution started under free-socialist, anarcho-syndicalist slogans. But — so Alexandra Kollontay tells us — it is becoming more and more militarized: special-

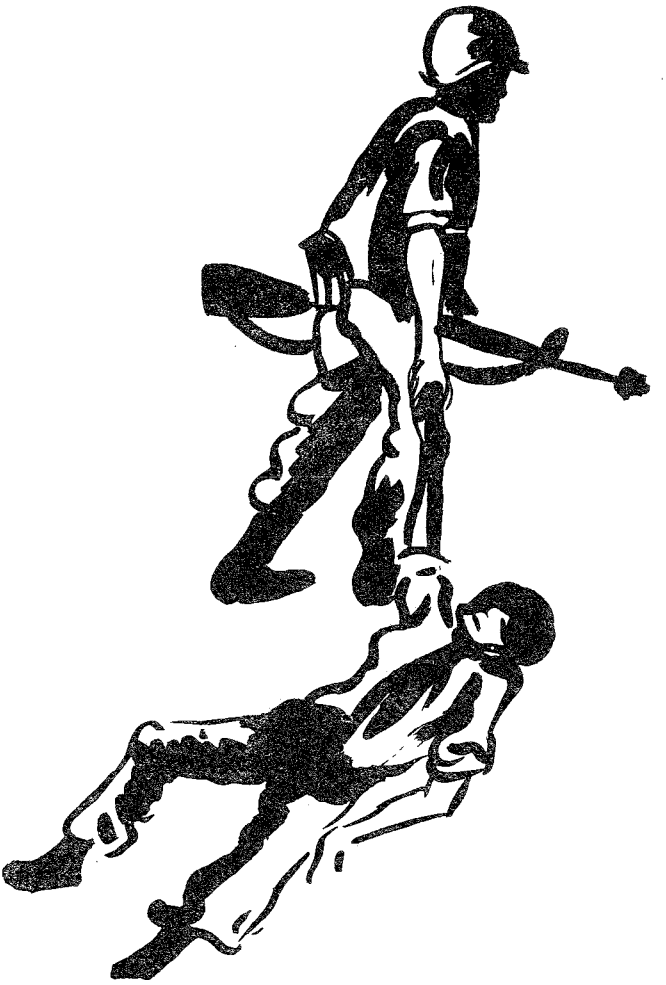
ists – those survivals from the past, whose whole nature is inseparably bound up with the old czarist system – crowd into the Red Army and import blind subordination, distinctions, ranks slavish obedience and high-handedness. All of this then finds its way from the army into social life, already spiritually prepared for it by dictatorship and the tyranny of party rule.

Mechanically obligatory service, in the army as well as the factory, is bourgeois and pre-bourgeois by nature. Forced upon people by threats and pinishment, it demands of them the disposition of "good" slaves or at least of slaves who are not "refractory".

The old discipline is external. The new discipline is internal: self-discipline; organizing oneself freely in accordance with the collectively chosen goal, with as far as possible each working according to aptitude and capacity. It is not a leaderless discipline. But its "leaders" are not as such authorities who must be obeyed. They are leaders only so far as they are unusually gifted or expert in certain respects and are freely recognized as such by their comrades. A free discipline like this is possible only in a revolutionary struggle against state, bureaucracy and compulsory service; against employers, officers and clerics; against an "International of cabinet ministers" or another International represented by Machiavelli Radek and Napoleon Trotsky. In this respect Pierre Ramus is right to speak of the socially emancipatory character of anti-militarism.

The proletarian revolution in Russia has gone downhill morally and practically. It has great value from a bourgeois point of view. From a proletarian point of view





it has meaning only as a miscarriage, as an inducement to reconsider one's position and as a reason to fight on.

The Russian leaders took only a few years to become vulgar politicians and opportunists, very skilled in their profession, but therefore all the more dangerous. They devote themselves increasingly to Russian nationalism. which grows powerfully and puts the entire Third International in its service.

Trotsky, an internationalist and anti-militarist, now vehementaly propagates a new provincialism: the United States of Europe with a joint budget for war and reconstruction; in other words an alliance of states under bolshevik and social-democratic direction, a giant capitalism ruled by Moscow. Radek speculates on joining up with Turkey and Japan. In order to win followers for his left politics he glorifies the German nationalist Schlageter and fawns on the most savage right chauvinsim.

A crazy impatience makes one disdainful of continuing to awaken revolution. Instead one hopes to thrust it upon the peoples of Europe.. One forgets that the exact effect of this method is to kill the revolution that one wants to bring to life. Vaillant Couturier anathematizes desertion and refusal of military service and glorifies – like all leaders of the French Communist Party – everyone who serves in the

army, because according to him army discipline is the best preparation for revolutionary discipline. One concentrates chiefly on what is external: discipline and violence. Bukharin, who for a long time already has been speaking with great relish about "proletarian militarism", now lets us know that if by any chance Russia, in alliance with a bourgeois power, should enter into war, all revolutionaries in the world would have the duty of supporting the bolshevik-bourgeois coalition. In Russia, as earlier in France, three years' military service has been institutied; one finds that the army there is organized – mechanized! – in a bourgeois and pre-bourgeois way; and one works industriously to build a navy and air force . . . the bolsheviks, once in opposition to the nationalism of the Second International, now appear as social-democratic nationalists and old-fashioned politicians and are just about ripe for the League of Nations.

Once again the old idea is confirmed that he who says state says war, says division of men into rulers and ruled, patriots and enemies. Bolshevism has at last come to the same conclusion as the Second International which it so often damned and persecuted.

Whereas Bukharin insists that Kautsky's orthodox marxism has capitulated in the wieghtiest questions of theory to Bernstein's revisionism, we must insist that in the weightiest questions of practice the revolutionary marxism of Lenin and Trotsky has capitulated to Kautsky's orthodox marxism. What Bukharin says of Kautsky and his followers, we say of Bukharin and his followers: "In their insolence they think they no longer need masks for themselves."

In essence the capitulation of bolshevism to nationalism is the same as the capitulation to war of Brailsford and other members of the English I.L.P.

At the last congress of the English Labour Party, Henderson explained that under present circumstances the party would be throwing away every chance of getting a majority and govering the country if it ceased to care about defending the country properly. Fenner Brockway, Wellock and other English comrades resisted this view and came out for international anti-militarism. But they in turn were strongly opposed, especially by Brailsford, who declared that "socialist defence" should be as fit as possible for its purpose. Fenner Brockway and Wellock were morally right. Brailsford, however, like Trotsky and Radek, was politically right. Whoever gives up war will have to give up the state. The anti-militarist internationalists of the I.L.P. must accordingly either go further and recognize that "anti-militarism is in the nature of things directed against capitalism and the state and makes straight for communistic anarchy" or, like the earlier international anti-militarists Brailsford and Trotsky, give up war against war and become nationalists.

That is why the Dutch social-democrats, who are preparing themselves to rule the country together with the Roman Catholics, cannot be real anti-militarists, and that is why they continuously sabotage any consistent anti-militarist struggle.

That is why the great majority at the Canadian Workers' Congress at Vancouver rejected the radical war-resisters' proposal to use the general strike to make war impossible.

Napoleon Trotsky and Machiavelli Radek are full of the same delusions as all bourgeois militarists, as all believers in violence. They speak of a budget for construction and reconstruction, and at the same time of a budget for destruction and war. They forget, however, that the budget for destruction nullifies the entire budget for construction. They want to compete in army and navy against the United States of America. Now in 1923-4 the U.S.A. will spend $547,946,364 on military purposes. But if the whole of Eurasia together with Japan should arm itself against the U.S.A., the Americans would have to increase their armaments much more again. In order to compete the United States of Europe would have to devote nearly

all its life to the "work of the dead" (Albert Liberted)." What would be left over for rehabilitation then, for construction? What would there be of the work of peace then, of culture, of happiness and freedom?

The workers internationally are on the wrong track. If they go much further they will become bogged down. Theirs is the way of the dead.

It is essential that the international proletariat grasps this. An incessant propaganda, conducted in breadth and depth, nationally and internationally, is needed in order to open people's eyes. There is only one way out, the way of anarchistic socialism. And this demands not only the overturning of capitalist society, but, in the first place, the moral uprising of the workers themselves. Bitter experience has shown

place, the moral uprising of the workers themselves. Bitter experience has shown that Bukunin was mostly right in his struggle of ideas with Marx. The ideas of the revolutionary syndicalists and social anarchists are still able to give reliable guidelines for a new social practice.

The struggle for freedom and against militarism must be persevered with as strongly as possible. It is necessary to make theoretical and practical propaganda in favour of desertion and refusal of military service, of a general strike in the spirit of the First International to prevent war, and so on. But it is necessary also — as Libertad in Frace, Nettlau in England and Austria, Rocker in Germany and we in the Netherlands have advocated — to make a tremendous propaganda effort for responsible production. All work of death must be absolutely refused. Workers must make only what makes life worth living.

The modern technology and chemistry of war have made war a matter of factory and laboratory in the first place. That is where we shall fight war! The example of the German, Italian, Dutch and Spanish workers who have directly and indirectly refused war service must not remain a small exception but become the great rule!

The proletariat has this in its power. In peace it can stop war. The syndicalist International's task is to work out tactics to make the revolutionary struggle against war effective.

Such a struggle will not be easy. But it will awaken the workers' respect for themselves, strengthen their personal power of action and speed up the overturning and renewing of society. It will sharpen human conscience, ennoble life and bring the means into harmony with the goal.

That is why we want a united front of comrades who will fight as one for free socialism. Our struggle against militarism is only the reverse side of a struggle for the conscious control of the entire process of production, for the free development of life and culture.

Workers arise in combat against the prostitution of mind and body!

(Translated from the Dutch by K.M.)

Credo of a Dissenter

by Max Nomad

(Born 1881 – Eastern Galicia. Died on April 18th, 1973 U.S.A.)

The world is a big stable which cannot be cleaned out as easily as the stalls of Augeas. For while the cleaning is going on the oxen remain inside piling up fresh dung all the time. *Heinrich Heine*

Force and Fraud

I believe that the human tragiccomedy is a puppet show kept going permanently by two wirepullers called Force and Fraud, the former disguised either as War or Revolution, while the latter wears the mask of Tradition or Ideology.

I believe that all organised government and all social classes and their conflicts have had their inception in the primeval wars between tribes or peoples, as a result of which the victorious invaders imposed themselves as masters over the defeated natives whose toil supplied the conquerors and their parasitic offspring with the leisure necessary for the creation of what is called "civilisation". A civilisation of inequality whose chief characteristics are exploitation and hypocrisy.

The Essential Urge

I believe with the sociologist Ludwig Gumplowicz that the **stronger man's essential "urge** to dominate and to exploit" makes for the ever recurring conscious or unconscious "conspiracy" by means of which the human wolves and foxes have been able to impose their rule and that of their offspring upon the majority of the human race – while at the same time fighting off competitors from among their own breed eager to take their place as the main beneficiaries of that civilisation.

Circulation of Elites

I believe that the inequalities of possessions and of education lying at the basis of all civilisations have been the cause of all social conflicts occasionally culminating in revolutions.

But I also believe that the result of all successful upheavals has been the creation of new inequalities with new privileged classes at the helm – a process called "circulation of elites" by Vilfredo Pareto. A process which enables the most ruthless and the most cunning among the underprivileged to rise to the top either as partners or as successors of the old elites and thus to perpetuate the immemorial master-and-servant pattern of civilised society.

Power

I believe that all political conflicts have been struggles for power waged between minorities: the near-privileged or would-be privileged "outs" – the poor relations, as it were, of those in power – fighting against, and often taking the power from, the over-privileged "ins". Struggles in the course of which the "outs" are often supported by the propertyless and the uneducated who constitute the great majority.

But I also believe that this majority, because of its lack of education, can never achieve power. For even where it has the right to vote, it has at best only a choice between candidates put up by the various essentially oligarchical "machines" of

privileged "ins" or would-be privileged "outs", candidates who, taken as a whole, represent the interests of the "haves" and the "knows" (and of their rivals), as against the great majority of "have-nots" and "know-nots."

I further believe that this "iron law of oligarchy" (a term coined by Robert Michels, the author of *Political Parties*) operates largely because man in general, is neither a democratic nor an anarchistic animal – much to the discomfiture of those who try to persuade themselves that a harmonious, libertarian, egalitarian millennium is possible. For **the average man** has always submitted to the "leader principle". It is this submissiveness that the ruling "in"-elites and the rebellious "out"-elites have always used as the main prop for the perpetuation or the consolidation of their power.

Revolt Against the Iron Law

I believe that the recognition of this "iron law of oligarchy" does not necessarily imply a plea for submission to fate. On the contrary, historical experience shows that it implies another "iron law" as well: that of revolt against it. Though submitting to their masters in "normal" times, the "have-nots" and the "know-nots" have rebelled against them whenever their rule overtaxed their endurance.

I realize that there is an inherent tragedy in all mass protests against the status quo. For these will either be crushed if they are leaderless and unorganised; or else most of the benefits of victory will be snatched by the **leaders – stepsons** of the middle classes or self-educated ex-workers.

Yet I also believe that whatever progress has been achieved in human relationships – the improvement of the standard of living and the advancement of man's dignity – is due to those revolts. For in the long run, their main beneficiaries, the new masters, are forced to alleviate the lot of the masses by what is called "social reforms."

But I doubt whether in many cases the price paid for the long delayed improvements would have been acceptable to the generation immediately subjected to the provations and sufferings following in the wake of revolution and civil war. Privations and sufferings whose brunt is as a rule carried by the masses, but not by the leaders – the immediate beneficiaries of the upheaval.

The "Knows" and the "Know-Nots"

I believe that education, one of the main aspects of civilisation, has become the invisible weapon that, more than brute force, has helped to maintain the hold of the ever-changing privileged minorities over the uneducated majorities, and that it will do so until the end of time. For the leaders of the occasionally rebelling uneducated underdog are themselves in possession of that invisible weapon. Whether as college-bred malcontents or as ambitious self-taught ex-workers, these leaders have always, consciously or unconsciously, used the mass movements for their own advancement, either as left-of-center politicians or as the office-holding and managerial elite of a socialised state, either democratic or totalitarian.

But I also believe that the ranks of those leaders have always contained a certain quota of selfless devoted champions of justice who have achieved glroy as dreamers and martyrs, but **not as makers of history**.

Intellect versus Capital

I believe that the new middle stratus of professional men, intellectual workers and technicians constitutes the coming master class, slated to succeed the capitalists, just as the latter succeeded the feudals.

I am aware of the fact that in view of the oversupply of intellectual workers and

their growing economic insecurity, many members of this class are becoming more and more receptive to theories which, one way or another, promise to satisfy their needs by establishing a socialised economy that would offer them well-aid employment and security, either under a democratic-socialist setup to be established as a result of gradual reforms, or under a totalitarian regime to be ushered in the wake of violent revolution.

I realise that the latter method has a particular attraction to the impecunious, unemployed or underpaid declasses, eager for, and in need of, an immediate radical change. I also realise that many fellow travelers – some of them constituting the flower of the world's intelligentsia – have adopted their attitude more as a protest against the greed and reactionary obtuseness of the capitalists than because of a special predilection for totalitarian tyranny.

Hence I believe that the only remedy against the spread of totalitarian tendencies is the immediate adoption of radical reforms resulting in the socialisation of public utilities and key industries, leaving, however, some scope for cooperative organisations and private enterprises as a counterweight to potential totalitarian tendencies of an all-powerful managerial hierarchy. These reforms will provide the educated have-nots with the job security that will dampen their enthusiasm for totalitarian adventures.

1917

I believe that at its outset the Bolshevik Revolution was the most inspiring event of modern history because of its protest against predatory imperialism, capitalist parasitism, and pseudo-democratic hypocrisy.

But the course of events has made me realise that the dictatorial rule of the upstart agitators, conspirators, journalists, and self-educated ex-workers, exercised over an uneducated majority, was bound to develop into the most ruthless exploitation and oppression of that majority in the interests of its alleged "liberators"; and that the cruelties, injustices, and shams of pseudo-democratic capitalism are as child's play, as compared to one-party "elections", mass executions with or without trial, and disguised or undisguised conquests of entire countries – their mitigation since Stalin's death notwithstanding; for there is no guarantee against their return.

And I also believe that a distinction is to be made between those who oppse Soviet totalitarianism because of its hostility to private enterprise, and those who reject it because of its threat to liberty and to the free development of human thought.

I believe that to be a rebel was a badge of honor during the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth when many of those to whom this designation applied were noble adventurers or tragic romantics fighting with their backs against the wall for national independence, political freedom, or a far-away socialist or anarchist millennium; rebels who, whatever their consicous or unconscious cravings for power, in most cases nourished little hope of seeing the day when their cause would triumph.

But I am aware of the fact that those of the old-time revolutionists who have tasted of the poisonous fruit of victory and power have turned into either common politicians or totalitarian tyrants; that most of the revolutionists of the present generation have disgraced their calling by becoming unprincipled agents or mercenaries of totalitarian powers, and that, far from being champions-errant of justice, they have adopted the ethics of professional killers and soldiers of fortune. And I am not impressed by the "heroic" death of some of them. For not a few of the Nazi butchers also showed composure and courage in the face of the gallows

"Inalienable Rights"

I believe in the right of the majority to have a voice in the choice of its rulers.

But I am fully aware of the fact that the democratic will of the majority is often misused by reactionaries who can easily induce the ignorant multitude to consent to the abolition of civil liberties and of all intellectual freedom.

Hence I agree with those champions of old-time liberalism and philosophical anarchism who claim that there are certain inalienable rights of the individual which no majority has the right to take away, and that in the defense of these rights, just as in the struggle for these rights, all means are justified.

However, I do not include in these "inalienable rights" the right to accumulate excessive wealth at the expense of the destitution of others; for this "right" violates what one might call the natural right of **every creature** to enjoy the good things of life, **provided he contributes his share to their production.**

Ideologies

I believe that there are highly attractive features in most progressive and radical political ideologies. For they are all replete with appeals to man's longing for justice, liberty, and equality.

But I realise that to all of them applies Professor Michael Karpovich's statement that "the humanitarianism of revolutionary ideas masks the lust for power of revolutionary personalities." For these men are more interested in maintaining their power by any means than in living up to their lofty original principles.

Marxism and the Two Opiums

I believe that Marxism has made a great contribution to political thought by its criticism of capitalist privilege and by its insistence on the role which class struggles have played in the course of history.

But I am also aware of the fact that by ignoring the potentialities of the new middle class of intellectual workers and by failing to anticipate the possibility of bureaucratic-managerial exploitation and oppression, Marxism, as a guide in matters of politics, has become as obsolete as have the theories of Hippocrates and Celsus for medical practice today.

It is for this reason that I see great merit in those ideas of Mechael Bakunin and Waclaw Machajski which, prior to the turn of the century, did anticipate the role of what now is called "the new class".

I fully agree with Marx's idea that political parties and movements are not to be judged by their arguments and phrases, or by what they think of themselves, but by their actions.

But in my opinion this profound tenet of Marxist realism should be applied not only to those parties which defend capitalism, but also to those movements which have been inspired by the doctrines of Marxism and whose leaders have evolved either into left-of-center neo-liberals or into totalitarian imperialists.

I believe with Marx that "religion is the opium of the people", and that, next to brute force, it has since time immemorial served to maintain the division of the human race into educated "haves" and uneducated "have-nots" by justifying the rule of those provided with spurs and the subjection of those bearing the saddles.

But I also believe that Marxism itself, for all its anticapitalist radicalism, has become the opium serving the interests of the new office-holding and managerial elite of a socialised form of economic inequality. For its dogma that capitalism is the last possible form of exploitation and that there is no class distinction between the non-

capitalist owners of education and those deprived of it, justifies the rule and the economic privileges of the office-holding and managerial elite now at the helm in all countries where private enterprise has either been abolished or is gradually being eliminated.

Democratic Socialism and Totalitarian Communism

I believe that socialism, as a gospel opposed to the exploitation of man by man, has been the inspiration of many idealists and friends of the downtrodden.

However, a study of the various theoretical systems of socialism and of their application in practice has convinced me that beneath those humanitarian professions there is hidden the desire merely to do away with **capitalist** exploitation for the sole purpose of substituting the rule of the office-holder and manager for that of the property-owner.

Yet I nevertheless believe that a distinction is to be made between the democratic socialism of today, which more and more veers in the direction of a pluralistic or "mixed" economy (a combination of public, cooperative and private ownership) with its safeguards against the authoritarian ambitions of a state bureaucracy, on the one hand, and the totalitarian form of government ownership (misnamed "communism"), on the other.

I further believe that consumers' and producers' cooperatives, such as have been in existence in England and in the Scandinavian countries, are the answer to the threat of bureaucratic omnipotence implied in full government ownership of all industries even under a democratic regime.

However, I am fully aware of the fact that the managerial elite of the cooperatives in charge of production and distribution of consumers' goods is inevitably bound to develop into a privileged group just as far removed from the rank and file of their organisations as is or would be the government bureaucracy from the rank and file workers of the public utilities and key industries.

Yet, I see in the inevitable rivalry of these two elites – each contending for more political and economic power – the best brake on the consolidation of a managerial and office-holding oligarchy that, for all its lip-service to deomcracy, might be aiming at the establishment of a totalitarian regime.

The Impossible Ideals

I believe that equality of incomes, regardless of individual differences as to abilities and education, for all those willing to work, and for all the incapacitated as well, is the great **ideal** of justice which should inspire all real friends of the underdog.

But I realise that this ideal can never be attained because of the insurmountable opposition of a ruthless or better endowed minority which, whatever the pattern of social organisation, will always come out on top, as the educated, managing elite.

And I realise that in their hearts, or in their dreams, most of the underprivileged themselves would prefer to see themselves as the members of a privileged minority rather than as equally rewarded citizens of an ideal commonwealth.

I also realise that anarchism, as the expression of man's longing for a harmonious social system that will do away with compulsion, is the most perfect ideal of human freedom which the imaginative genius of a true liberal could conceive.

But I realise that this ideal, like all other ideals, is a mirage. For it combines the rejection of power on moral grounds because of its corrupting influence, with the naive belief that **all** forms of government are superfluous and **equally** evil. Now, no form of social organisation is possible without some sort of authority. And it makes a great difference whether that authority offers certain guarantees of personal liberty, or whether it reduces the individual to complete subjection. In other words, whether one is ruled by corrupt politicians or totalitarian policemen.

(So much about anarchism in its "pure" form, as preached by such visionaries as Kropotkin and accepted by their unsophisticated follwing. In its more realistic inter pretation, anarchism may be conceived as a decentralised and more militant variant of democratic socialism.)

Labor Unionism

I believe with the trade unionists that whatever real improvements have been attained in the lot of the workers are to be credited to a very large extent to their unions and to their struggles for higher wages and shorter hours.

But I am not blind to the fact that the unions have brought forth a new elite of ex-workers, a new hierarchy of labor bureaucrats who have attained a middle class and even an upper middle class standard of living, and for this reason are interested in the maintenance of the status quo, their occasional diatribes against the employers notwithstanding.

And I am equally aware of the fact that union members, as a whole, are prone to submit unquestioningly to the authoritarian rule of the self-perpetuating union officials, and that those members who have the courage to challenge them, invariably if they succeed, will step into the shoes, and in one way or another continue the game, of their predecessors.

Nationalism – Racism – Internationalism

I believe that the struggle for national independence is one of the aspects of man's longing for justice and liberty.

But I am not unaware of the fact that, without exception, the "haves" and the "knows" of every ethnic group engaged in the struggle for self-determination, reneged on their professions of lofty principles as soon as, in turn, they could lay hands on some national minority or a helpless native majority. Witness the treatment of the Ukrainians in resurrected Poland (1918-1939) where practically all government jobs were monopolised by the Polish intelligentsia; of the Slovaks in independent Czechoslovakia (1918-1939), and of the Croats in pre-Tito Yugoslavia, where the Czechs and Serbs played the same role as the Poles in their respective countries. Not to speak of the fate of the Negro natives in the Union of South Africa whose white masters, at the turn of the century, had earned the world's admiration for their heroic struggle against British imperialism.

I understand the mental processes of many Negroes, Jews, and other "untouchables" and near-untouchables who, in their resentment against the indignities they have to suffer, take a friendly attitude towards the Colossus of the East which has allegedly done away with such outrages.

But I wonder why they cannot realise that imprisonment or execution because of political non-conformity are even worse evils than discrimination and segregation.

And I am afraid that the Kremlin (or China) will win to its side all the nations of Africa and Asia **unless the United States** and the United Nations outlaw and suppress all manifestations of "white supremacy."

I believe that internationalism has been one of the noblest features of the various shades of world radicalism.

But I am aware of the fact that the internationalism of nineteenth and twentieth century radicals and liberals was in most cases merely a tactical device considered necessary at a time when the champions of political democracy and national independence were faced by a united front of international reaction. Witness the intense nationalism of Mazzini who was the founder of the first revolutionary international organisation in early nineteenth century Europe; witness also the often chauvinistic outbursts of Marx and Bakunin, the champions of international socialism and anarchism respectively. Not to mention the ultra-patriotic and even imperialistic

And I am particularly aware of the fact that the internationalism, as preached by the Communists, is nothing but a mask for neo-Russian imperialism – which is now faced by the pan-Asiatic ambitions of the Chinese Communists.

The Totalitarian Triplets

I am aware of the difference between Fascism and Communism in spite of the undeniable similarity of their methods and of the essential fact that both represent the interests of the same social stratum: the job-and-power hungry "outs" or declasses among professionals, intellectuals and semi-intellectuals striving to become the all-powerful bureaucracy of a totalitarian state.

But I believe that the difference consists chiefly in the verbiage in which the totalitarian rivals clothe their similar ambitions, the Fascists cynically displaying a philosophy of predatory conquest and enslavement, while the Communists – taking a leaf from Judeo-Christian make-believe humanitarianism – hypocritically pretend that their aim is the liberation of all mankind.

And I also believe that in practice the difference between the Fascists and the Communists consists in the method of their approach to the various classes of the population. The Fascists promise to the capitalists to put the "mob" in its place, and to the "mob" to elevate it to the status of a master race over other people. The Communists attract the educated by the prospect of their becoming members of a privileged, office-holding elite as soon as their party takes over, while the workers are made to believe that there is equality of incomes under the soviet system, even though this primise is merely implied but not put down in writing.

I concur with the opinion of those who believe that the Catholic Church is the oldest, best organised totalitarian institution whose past performances have, or could have, served as a model for all modern totalitarians.

I am aware of the fact that the Church has given its blessing to such fascist or near-fascist regimes as those headed by Dollfuss in Austria, Franco in Spain, Salazar in Portugal, Laureano Gomez in Colombia, and that it was behind the ambitions of Leopold III to establish a similar regime in Belgium.

But I also believe that because of its archaic philosophy the totalitarianism of the Church represents today a lesser danger to freedom than the more aggressive totalitarianism of the Communists, with its pseudo-revolutionary vocabulary and its demagogic appeal to the dissatisfied and underprivileged the world over.

I believe that the menace of totalitarianism could be averted if the intellectuals, eager for the free expression of their opinions, could find a common ground with the working masses, eager for a better share in the good things of life. But I wonder how such an "alliance" could be brought about, considering that the intellectuals are as a rule engrossed in their own problems, while the workers are ready to accept any form of abscrurantist or totalitarian rule – as they did under Peron – as long as they are granted or promised a full dinner pail.

Progress

I am aware of the argument that by opposing the spread of what is called "Communism" – whether of the Moscow or the Peking brand – the United States, historically speaking, plays an "anti-revolutionary" role analogous to that of the Holy Alliance in the early part of the last century. And I don't feel very comfortable about the company I find myself in when I add my voice to the chorus of those opposing the "new light" coming once more, like Christianity, from the East.

But I realise that not every new departure is **co ipso** a step in advance, or else Fascism, too, should have been accepted as a "progressive" phenomenon because of its essential, though often camouflaged, anti-capitalism. Not to speak of Christianity whose victorious opposition to the infamies of imperial Rome ushered in several

centuries of Dark Ages.

Hence I remain an unattached, unregimented opponent of both capitalism and so-called "Communism". And I hope against hope that the mastes

Hence I remain an unattached, unregimented opponent of both capitalism and so-called "Communism". And I hope against hope that the masters of the Western world will eventually yield to the pressure of those elements of the non-totalitarian Left who believe in a more equitable redistribution of incomes under the aegis of a democratic socialism or near-socialism that does not infringe upon personal liberty. That new departure will not usher in the millennium, for the world will always be ruled by some sort of privileged minority. But it will constitute an effective barrier to the onrushing wave of intolerance and obacurantism, the "cultural" earmarks of any newly established office-holding and managerial oligarchy, afraid of competition, which it identifies with counter-revolution.

I admit that, after one of two more generations – provided nothing unforeseeable happens in the meantime – totalitarian collectivism, Moscow or Peking style, may gradually evolve into some sort of democratic socialism, the least oppressive form of economic inequality. But most of those now alive will be dead by that time. Hence we must protect today what little liberty we still have against both the despotic "liberators" from the East and their ultra-reactionary and ultra-plutocratic opponents in the West, who tremble for their over-privileged incomes and would do away with all social reforms and all cultural liberty as alleged steps in the direction of Communism.

Utopia?

I am aware of the fact that in their basic behavior the poor are just as vicious, intolerant and contemptible as the rich; that they gleefully embrace the most reactionary, the most anti-humantarian slogans of their masters, or of their masters' power-hungry stepsons and rivals, and that, as a rule, they are more prone to pounce upon their just as poor or even poorer fellow-workers who are of a different skin color, language or belief than upon their employers.

Yet, for all my lack of illusions about the masses, as they are, I hope that, as a result of their permanent struggle **for more and always more**, they will eventually achieve a standard of living that will raise them substantially above their present level. This will reduce the temperature of the hell in which all those are fated to live whom the accident of birth, or the lack of the necessary brutality, energy and cunning, or of some extraordinary gifts, has doomed to serve as a pedestal for the ever renascent privileged elite of either ruthless upstarts or beneficiaries of inherited wealth or position.

Having obtained many of the comforts produced by his labor, the underdog may eventually acquire some veneer of near-culture and perhaps find some merit in the arguments of those who prefer liberty of opinion to intolerance and to unquestioning submission to authority.

This is my Utopia. I wish I could be as optimistic as I was some sixty years ago, when I believed in the possibility of the egalitarian and libertarian millennium of Kropotkin's dreams.

Of Student Poverty

by an International Situationist

We might very well say, and no-one would disagree with us, that that the student is the most universally despised creature in France, apart from the priest and the policeman. Naturally he is usually attacked from the wrong point of view, with specious reasons derived from the ruling ideology. He may be worth the contempt of a true revolutionary, yet a revolutionary critique of the student situation is currently taboo on the official Left. The licensed and impotent opponents of capitalism repress the obvious – that what is wrong with the students is also what is wrong with them. They convert their unconscious contempt into a blind enthusiasm. The radical intelligentsia (from *Les Temps Modernes* to *L'Express*) prostrates itself before the so-called "rise of the student" and the declining bureaucracies of the Left (from the "Communist" party to the Stalinist National Union of Students) bids noisily for his moral and material support.

There are reasons for this sudden enthusiasm, but they are all **provided** by the present form of capitalism, in its overdeveloped state. We shall use this pamphlet for denunciation. We shall expose these reasons one by one, on the principle that the end of alienation is only reached by the straight and narrow path of alienation itself.

Up to now, studies of student life have ignored the essential issue. The surveys and analyses have all been psychological or sociological or economin: in other words, academic exercises, content with the false categories of one specialisation or another. None of them can achieve what is most needed – a view of modern society as a whole. Fourier denounced their error long ago as the attempt to apply scientific laws to the basic assumptions of the science. Everything is said about principles – the commodity and the spectacle. The fetishism of facts masks the essential category, and the details consign the totality to oblivion.

Modern capitalism and its spectacle allot everyone a specific role in a general passivity. The student is no exception to the rule. He has a provisional part to play, a rehearsal for his final role as an element in market society as conservative as the rest. Being a student is a form of initiation. An initiation which echoes the rites of more primitive societies with bizarre precision. It goes on outside of history, cut off from reality. The student leads a double life, poised between his present status and his future role. The two are absolutely separate, and the journey from one to the other is a mechanical event "in the future". Meanwhile, he basks in a schizophrenic consciousness, withdrawing into his initiation group to hide from that future. Protected from history, the present is mystic trance.

At least in consciousness, the student can exist apart from the official truths of "economic life". But for very simple reasons, looked at economically, student life is a hard one. In our "society of abundance", he is still a pauper, 80% of students come from income groups well above the working class, yet 90% have less money than the meanest labourer. Student poverty is an anachronism, a throw-back from an earlier age of capitalism; it does not share in the **new** poverties of the spectacular societies; it has yet to attain the new poverty of the new proletariat. Nowadays the teenager shuffles off the moral prejudices and authority of the family to become part of the market even before he is adolescent; at fifteen he has all the delights of being directly exploited. In contrast the student covets his protracted infancy as an irresponsible and docile paradise. Adolescence and its crises may bring occasional brushes

with his family, but in essence he is not troublesome; he agrees to be treated as a baby by the institutions which provide his education. There is no "student problem", for each sector of social life has been subdued by a similar imperialism.

Our social thinkers have a bad conscience about the student problem, but only because the real problem is the poverty and servitude of all. But we have different reasons to despise the student and all his work. What is unforgivable is not so much his actual misery but his complaisance in the face of the misery of others. For him there is only one real alienation: his own. He is a full-time and happy consumer of that commodity, hoping to arouse at least our pity, since he cannot claim our interest. By the logic of modern capitalism, most students can only become mere **petis cadres** (with the same function in neo-capitalism as the skilled worker had in the nineteenth-century economy). The student really knows how miserable will be that golden future which is supposed to make up for the shameful poverty of the present. In the face of that knowledge, he prefers to dote on the present and invent an imaginary prestige for himself. After all, there will be no magical compensation for present drabness; tomorrow will be like yesterday, lighting these fools the way to dusty death. Not unnaturally he takes refuge in an unreal present.

The student is a stoical slave: the more chains authority heaps upon him, the freer he is in phantasy. He shares with his new family, the University, a belief in a curious kind of autonomy. Real independence, apparently, lies in a direct subservience to the two most powerful systems of social control: the family and the State. He is their well behaved and grateful child, and like the submissive child he is over eager to please. He celebrates all the values and mistifications of the system, devouring them with all the anxiety of the infant at the breast. Once, the old illusions had to be imposed on an aristocracy of labour; the **petits cadres**-to-be ingest them willingly under the guise of culture.

There are various forms of compensation for poverty. The total poverty of ancient societies produced the grandiose compensation of religion. The student's poverty by contrast is a marginal phenomenom, and he casts around for compensations among the most down-at-heel images of the ruling class. He is a bore who repairs the old jokes of an alienated culture. Even as an ideologist, he is always out of date. One and all, his latest enthusiasms were ridiculous thirty years ago.

Once upon a time the universities were respected; the student persists in the belief that he is lucky to be there. But he arrived too late. The bygone excellence of bourgeois culture "has vanished". A mechanically produced specialist is now the goal of the "educational system". A modern economic system demands mass production of students who are not educated and have been rendered incapable of thinking. Hence the decline of the universities and the automatic nullity of the student once he enters its portals. The university has become a society for the propagation of ignorance; "high culture" has taken on the rhythm of the production line; **without exception**, university teachers are cretins, men who would get the bird from any audience of schoolboys. But all this hardly matters; the important thing is to go on listening respectfully. In time, if critical thinking is repressed with enough conscientiousness, the student will come to partake of the wafer of knowledge, the professor will tell him the final truths of the world. Till then — a menopause of the spirit. As a matter of course the future revolutionary society will condemn the doings of lecture theatre and faculty as mere noise — socially undesirable. The student is already a very bad joke.

The student is blind to the obvious — that even his closed world is changing. The "crisis of the university" — that detail of a more general crisis of modern capitalism

is the latest fodder for the deaf-mute dialogue of the specialists. This "crisis" is simple to understand; the difficulties of a specialised sector which is adjusting (too late) to a general change in the relations of production. There was once a vision – if an ideological one – of a liberal bourgeois' university. But as its social base disappeared, the vision became banality. In the age of free-trade capitalism, when the "liberal" state left it its marginal freedoms, the university could still think of itself as an independent power. Of course it was a pure and narrow product of that society's needs – particularly the need to give the privileged minority an adequate general culture before they rejoined the ruling (not that going up to university was straying very far from class confines). But the bitterness of the nostaligic don is understandable: better, after all, to be the blood-hound of the **haute Bourgeoisie** than sheep dog to the world's white collars. Better to stand guard on privilege than harry the flock into their allotted factories and bureaux, according to the whims of the "planned economy". The university is becoming, fairly smoothly, the honest broker of technocracy and its spectacle. In the process, the purists of the academic Right become a pitiful sideshow, purveying their "universal" cultural goods to a bewildered audience of specialists.

More serious, and thus more dangerous, are the modernists of the Left and the Students' Union, with their talk of a "reform of University structure" and a "reinsertion of the University into social and economic life", i.e. its adaptation to the needs of modern capitalism. The one-time suppliers of general culture to the ruling classes, though still guarding their old prestige, must be converted into the forcing-house of a new labour aristocracy. Far from contesting the historical process which subordinates one of the last relatively autonomous social groups to the demands of the market, the progressives complain of delay and inefficiency in its completion. They are the standard-bearers of the cybernetic university of the future (which has already reared its ugly head in some unlikely quarters). And they are the enemy; the fight against the market, which is starting again in earnest, means the fight against its latest lackeys.

As for the student, this struggle is fought out entirely over his head, somewhere in the heavenly realm of his masters. The whole of his life is beyond his control, and for all he sees of the world he might as well be on another planet. His acute economic poverty condemns him to a paltry form of **survival**. But being a complacent creature, he parades his very ordinary indigence as if it were an original lifestyle: self-indulgently, he affects to be a Bohemian. The Bohemian solution is hardly viable at the best of times, and the notion that it could be achieved without a complete and final break with the university milieu is quite ludicrous. But the student Bohemian (and every student likes to pretend that he is a Bohemian at heart) clings to his false and degraded version of individual revolt. He is so "eccentric" that he continues – thirty years after Reich's excellent lesson – to entertain the most traditional forms of erotic behaviour, reproducing at this level the general relations of class society. Where sex is concerned, we have learnt better tricks from elderly provincial ladies. His rent-a-crowd militancy for the latest food cause is an aspect of his real impotence.

The student's old-fashioned poverty, however, does put him at a potential advantage – if only he could see it. He does have marginal freedoms, a small area of liberty which as yet escapes the totalitarian control of the spectacle. His flexible working-hours permit him adventure and experiment. But he is a sucker for punishment, and freedom scares him to death; he feels safer in the straight-jacketed space-time of lecture hall and weekly "essay". He is quite happy with this open prison organised for his "benefit", and, though not constrained, as are most people, to separate work and leisure, he does so of his own accord – hypocritically proclaiming all the while his

contempt for assiduity and grey men. He embraces every available contradiction and then mutters darkly about the "difficulties of communications" from the uterine warmth of his religious, artistic or political clique.

Driven by his freely-chosen depression, he submits himself to the subsidiary police force of psychiatrists set up by the avant-garde of repression. The university mental health clinics are run by the student mutual organisation, which sees this insitution as a grand victory for student unionism and social progress. Like the Aztecs, who ran to greet Cortes' sharpshooters, and then wondered what made the thunder and why men fell down, the students flock to the psycho-police stations with their "problems".

The real poverty of his everyday life finds its immediate, phantastic compensations in the opium of cultural commodities. In the cultural spectacle he is allotted his habitual role of the dutiful disciple. Although he is close to the production-point, access to the Sanctuary of Thought is forbidden, and he is obliged to discover "modern

culture" as an **admiring spectator. Art is dead, but the student is necrophiliac. He** pecks at the corpse in cine-clubs and theatres, buys its fish-fingers from the cutural supermarket. Consuming unreservedly, he is in his element; he is the living proof of all the platitudes of American market research; a conspicuous consumer, compete complete with induced irrational preference for Brand X (Camus, for example), and irrational prejudice against Brand Y (Sartre, perhaps).

Impervious to real passions, he seeks titillation in the battles between his anaemic gods, the stars of a vacuous heaven: Althusser-Garaudy-Barthes-Picard-Lefebvre-Levi-Stauss-Halliday-de Chardin- Brassens. . . ., and between their rival theologies, designed like all theologies to mask the real problems by creating false ones: humanism-existentialism-scientism-structuralism-cyberneticism-new criticism-dialectics-of-naturism-metaphilosophism. . . .

He thinks he is avant-garde if he has seen the latest Godard or "participated" in the latest happening. He discovers "modernity" as fast as the market can produce its ersatz version of long outmoded (though once important) ideas; for him, every rehash is a cultural revolution. His principal concern is status, and he eagerly snaps up all the paperback editions of important and "difficult" texts with which mass culture has filled the bookstores. Unfortunately, he cannot read, so he devours them with his gaze, and enjoys them vacariously through the gaze of his friends. He is an other-directed **voyeur.**

His favourite reading matter is the **kitsch** press, whose task it is to orchestrate the consumption of cultural nothing-boxes. Docile as ever the student accepts its commercial **ukases** and makes them the only measuring-rod of his tastes. Typically, he is a compulsive reader of weeklies like le *Nouvel Observateur* and *L'Express* (whose nearest English equivalents are the posh Sundays and *New Society*). He generally feels that *le Monde* – whose style he finds somewhat difficult – is a truly objective newspaper. And it is with such guides that he hopes to gain an understanding of the modern world and become a political initiate!

In France more than anywhere else, the student is passively content to be politicised. In this sphere too, he readily accepts the same alienated, spectacular participation. Seizing upon all the tattered remnants of a Left which was annihilated **more than forty years ago** by "socialist" reformism and Stalinist counter-revolution, he is once more guilty of an amazing ignorance. The Right is well aware of the defeat of the workers movement, and so are the workers themselves, though more confusedly. But the students continue blithely to organise demonstrations which mobilise students and students only. This is political false consciousness in its virgin state, a fact which naturally makes the universities a happy hunting ground for the manipulators of the declining bureaucratic organisations. For them, it is child's play to programme the student's political options. Occasionally there are deviationary tendencies and cries of "Independence!" but after a period of token resistance the dissidents are reincorporated into a **status quo** which they have never really radically opposed. The "Jeunesses Communistes Revolutionnaires", whose title is a case of ideological falsification gone mad (they are neither young, nor communist, nor revolutionary), have with much brio and accompanying publicity defied the iron hand of the Party . . . but only to rally cheerily to the pontifical battle cry, "Peace in Vietnam!"

The student prides himself on his opposition to the "archaic" Gaulist regime. But he justifies his criticism by appealing – without realising it – to older and far worse crimes. His radicalism prolongs the life of the different currents of edulcorated Stalinism: Togliati's appalling **naivete**, and his attitudes are in reality far more archaic than the regime's – the Gaulists do after all understand modern society well enough to administer it.

But the student, sad to say, is not deterred by the odd anachronism. He feels obliged to have general ideas on everything, to unearth a coherent world-view capable of lending meaning to his need for activism and asexual promiscuity. As a result, he falls prey to the last doddering missionary efforts of the churches. He rushes with atavistic ardour to adore the putrescent carcass of God, and cherishes all the stinking detritus of prehistoric religions in the tender belief that they enrich him and his time. Along with their sexual rivals, those elderly provincial ladies, the students form the social category with the highest percentage of admitted adherents to these archaic cults. Everywhere else, the priests have been either beaten off or devoured, but university clerics shamelessly continue to bugger thousands of students in their spiritual shithouses.

We must add in all fairness that there do exist students of a tolerable intellectual level, who without difficulty dominate the controls designed to check the mediocre capacity demanded from the others. They do so for the simple reason that they have understood the system, and so despise it and know themselves to be its enemies. They are in the system for what they can get out of it – particularly grants. Exploiting the contradiction which, for the moment at least ensures the maintenance of a small sector – "research" – still governed by a liberal-academic rather than a technocratic rationality, they calmly carry the germs of sedition to the highest level; their open contempt for the organisation is the counterpart of a lucidity which enables them to outdo the system's lackeys, intellectually and otherwise. Such students cannot fail to become theorists of the coming revolutionary movement. For the moment, they make no secret of the fact that what they take so easily from the system shall be used for its overthrow.

The student, if he rebels at all, must first rebel against his studies, though the necessity of this initial move is felt less spontaneously by him than by the workers, who intuitively identifies his work with his total condition. At the same time, since the student is a product of modern society just like Godard or Coca Cola, his extreme alienation can only be fought through the struggle against this whole society. It is clear that the university can in no circumstances become the battlefield; the student, insofar as he defines himself as such, manufactures a reality of his dispossession. The best criticism of student life is the behaviour of the rest of youth, who have already started to revolt. Their rebellion has become one of the signs of a fresh struggle against modern society.

An Anarchist Press is presently operating in Melbourne. It prints and publishes anarchist journals, leaflets and propaganda bulletins. However money is needed to enlarge the capacity of the press group and enable it to publish an Anarchist Newspaper. It will also mean an ability to print a few greater range of publications.

Please send donations, however large or small, tp amy of the following adresses:

P.O Box A425 Sydney South. N.S.W. 2000
P.O.Box 45 North Richmond. Vic. 3121

.A.A. PRINCI LES

The Federation consists of those groups and individuals in Australia who:

a) are opposed to both capitalist and state socialism.

b) accept the possibility and desirability of libertarian socialism, i.e. cooperative social economy without the state.

c) reject the view that the state i.e. police army, parliament and bureaucracy - is the decisive instrument for the achievement of a libertarian social order, and

d) accept the necessity of cooperation, planning and organisation for the achievement of anarchist aims.

AIMS

a) to struggle against statist, sexist, racist, ageist and authoritarian conception in all spheres of social life,

b) to prepare the theoretical, ideological--cultural, moral, and material-organisational prerequisites for effective and permanent popular self-government in future crises,

c) to propagate the general idea of libertarian socialism,

d) to initiate, assist and participate in practical struggles for partial objectives on the basis of their relationship to libertarian socialist aims and objectives,

a) to foster the development of the world anarchist movement both through building a strong Australian section and through mutual aid and discussion with other national sections.

Australian publications

F.A.A.Bulletin.(every two month)
P.O.Box 45, North Richmond,
Vic. 3121

Acracia. (monthly) Available from:
P.O.BOX 45, North Richmond,
Vic. 3121

Broadsheet.Sydney Libertarians Box 2986
G.P.O Sydney. 2000
N.S.W

Militando. (In Spanish- monthly)
c/- P.O.Box A425,
Sydney South. N.S.W. 2000

ARTHUR MOYSE